#1

"COMPROMISING POSITIONS"

Screenplay By
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and William Link

Based on the book by
Susan Isaacs

FIRST DRAFT

4/29/78

FADE IN ON:

POLAROID CAMERA

In limbo. A male hand ENTERS SHOT and slaps in a film pack. Attaches a flash bar. Aims, focuses, and presses the shutter. The flash goes off and a photograph ejects. It's tossed on a tabletop.

TITLES BEGIN as the picture develops. Slowly and tantalizingly. At first a blur of colors -- flesh-tones -- and then, gradually, the discernable shape of a woman. Completely naked. Her head is turned away, but there is an emerging view of her shoulders, her bare back, and the swelling of her hips ...

TITLES CONTINUE as another photograph is dropped on the first. And then another. An increasing array of blondes, brunettes, and redheads ... the pictures milky but slowly growing sharper ... almost teasingly displaying a thigh, a breast, the graceful curve of an arm. It's not important who the women are -- most of their faces are in shadow, or cut off at the chin -- nor are the photographs particularly erotic. They are more like abstract fragments of the female form. Birds without plumage. Trapped by the constantly clicking shutter ...

As TITLES END the camera plunks down on the table, the centerpiece of a circle of women.

FADE OUT

FADE IN ON:

BRIGHT LIGHT

Flaring INTO CAMERA. A man's face MOVES INTO FRAME. Smiling slightly. Eclipsing the light. He looks down at:

JUDITH SINGER

Sound asleep in a dentist's chair. A napkin is tucked under her chin.

FLECKSTEIN'S VOICE
(softly)
Judith ...
(then, more insistent)
Judith?

CONTINUED:

Her eyes blink open and she squints up at the light. Embarrassed and disoriented.

JUDITH

Uh?

WIDER ANGLE

DR. BRUCE M. FLECKSTEIN hovers over her, amused. He's trim, handsome, and pleasantly predatory. His dental tunic is a pastel blue, matching his office walls, and whenever he moves there is the soft music of gold chains and medallions. He has perhaps the best tan in New York State. And the whitest teeth.

FLECKSTEIN

You fell asleep.

JUDITH

(flustered)

I did? Oh, Lord, I'm sorry.

FLECKSTEIN

Happens all the time. Open, please.

Judith obeys. Fleckstein begins to probe with a pick. They are almost cheek-to-cheek.

FLECKSTEIN

So-o-o tired. All the ladies are so tired. Ever notice that?

JUDITH

Mgph.

FLECKSTEIN

Lot of people think it's low blood sugar. I think it's something else.

(pauses)

You're not using unwaxed dental floss, are you?

She shakes her head guiltily.

FLECKSTEIN

You really should. Do you have a Water-Pik?

A nod. His mirror in her mouth precludes speech.

CONTINUED:

FLECKSTEIN

Doesn't do us any good sitting on the sink, now does it? ... Rinse.

Judith gargles from the paper cup and expectorates as delicately as possible.

FLECKSTEIN

What I think it is is boredom. Nobody really understands. The laundry, the car pool, the supermarket ... I'd probably doze off myself. Sad state of affairs ...

He clucks his tongue sympathetically. His hand — ever so casual — comes to rest on her shoulder.

JUDITH

(nervous)

Uh — listen, I really appreciate your fitting me in. My filling dropped out at the vets. We have this new dog? Anyway, I called Dr. Burns but he's in the Virgin Islands —

FLECKSTEIN

Lucky Dr. Burns. Okay, we'll fix it in a jiff. Open, please.

He resumes his examination, somehow managing to make it an intimate procedure. For a moment he hums along with the office Muzak. Then:

FLECKSTEIN

You're a very attractive woman, Judith. Do you know that?

JUDITH

Mng.

FLECKSTEIN

Exceptionally attractive ... I spend all day looking into people's mouths. Tartar and plaque, right? But every once in a while a mouth suddenly has a face.

(beat)

You have a face, Judith.

He's so involved in passing along this compliment that he forgets what he's doing with his instruments.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

Ow!

FLECKSTEIN

Oops. Sorry. You're a little tender there, aren't you?

JUDITH

I just feel like I have this crater.

(then, quickly)

Uh — can you tell me how long this'll take? I have to get over to school and pick up my kids. They're rehearsing a play and —

FLECKSTEIN

(smiles)

Okay, you did it.

JUDITH

Did what?

FLECKSTEIN

Told me you have children. Judith, I assumed you have children. And I'm sure you're happily married. All I wanted to do was tell you how pretty you are. Now is that so terrible of me?

JUDITH

N-no.

FLECKSTEIN

Good. Open, please.

(she opens)

And if I give you a call and ask you to lunch, it could be a very innocent thing. Couldn't it?

JUDITH

(his mirror is back in her mouth)

Glul —

FLECKSTEIN

(smoothly)

I'll take that as a yes. Wider, please.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

Judith comes from the office, novacained but in reasonable repair. Fleckstein's nurse is getting ready to leave for the day. Her name is LORNA LEWIS — she's a bit more voluptuous than one would expect among the plastic plants and back issues of Dental Health.

LORNA
How's the tooth?

JUDITH
Numb. Do you believe I defrosted steaks? Now I'm not supposed to chew on anything tough. Story of my life.

LORNA
Does he want to see you again?

JUDITH
(startled)
Uh?

LORNA
Dr. Fleckstein. Do you need another appointment?

JUDITH
Oh. No, Dr. Burns is coming back next week.

She goes to the door just as Fleckstein emerges from his office.

FLECKSTEIN
Lorna —
(notices Judith)
Miss Lewis — I'd like you to come in early tomorrow. I want to talk to you.

LORNA
I can stay now —

FLECKSTEIN
(curt)
Tomorrow will be fine. Oh, and you have a portable typewriter at home, don't you?

LORNA
Y-yes?

CONTINUED:

FLECKSTEIN
Bring it in with you.

She looks at him somewhat warily, but Fleckstein has now turned his attention to Judith. He favors her with a smile.

Fleckstein
Have a nice evening, Judith.

He goes back into his office.

HAPPY FACE

One of those grinny heads with dots for eyes. It's affixed to the rear bumper of Judith's station wagon. ANGLE TO SHOW Judith coming out of the front entrance of a suburban medical building. It's late afternoon and most people are homeward bound. She pauses on the steps and pokes a finger in her mouth, gingerly tapping her tooth. A moment later Lorna Lewis leaves the building, catching her in the act, and goes off in the opposite direction. Feeling slightly foolish, Judith heads for her car. The neighborhood is typical of the North Shore of Long Island — everything quaint, cozy, and Colonial. We half expect Ben Franklin to walk by with Paul Revere. The names on the shops tell us that we're in the town of Shorehaven.

NEW ANGLE

There's an incredible yapping from inside the station wagon as she approaches. A mongrel puppy with the unfortunate name of Max bounds around on the front seat. Judith opens the door and the two of them roughhouse affectionately.

JUDITH
Hiya, Maxie. You miss me?
(looks around)
Maxie, what do I smell? You didn't!

And then her roving eye spots something and she groans. A traffic ticket has been slipped under her windshield wiper.

JUDITH
Oh, hell!

CONTINUED:

She sees that the curbside meter has run out, retrieves the ticket, and stares at it gloomily. It's definitely not her day.

BRUTUS

A 12-year-old version. Swathed in a toga that doesn't quite conceal its ancestry as a bedsheet.

BRUTUS
(declaiming)
I kiss thy hand, but not in flattery, Caesar ...

WIDER ANGLE - SHOREHAVEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAGE

A rehearsal of "Julius Caesar" is in progress, and the playing area is crowded with fifteen or twenty kids, all of them fugitives from a laundromat. The Roman Senate is represented by several papier-mache columns, and the conspirators conceal knives of silver-painted cardboard.

BRUTUS
... desiring thee, that Publius Cimber may have an immediate freedom on appeal.

CAESAR
What, Brutus!

NEW ANGLE - AUDITORIUM

Judith slips in through the rear doors and quietly makes her way down the center aisle. A few mothers are scattered about, one or two doing needlepoint, and the drama teacher stands in the wings. Rapt. Clutching a script to her breast. Judith slides into a seat.

HER POV - SENATORS

Among them are her two children, KATE, 10, and JOEY, 7. Joey squints out into the auditorium, sees his mother, and gives her a semaphore to tell her where he is. Kate cuffs him.

ON JUDITH

Motioning for them to cool it.

BACK TO SCENE

as the play plows raggedly on. The conspirators begin to encircle Caesar, who wears a drooping laurel wreath and Addidas sneakers. His eyes are glazed as he tries to remember his lines. Some of the senators are girls — a tentative Shorehaven nod to Womens Lib.

CASSIUS

Pardon, Caesar; Caesar, pardon:
as low as thy foot doth Cassius
fall, to beg enfranchisement for
Publius Cimber.

CAESAR

I could well be mov'd, if I were
as you; if I could pray to move,
prayers would move me; but I am as
constant as the northern star ...

Now, abruptly and unexpectedly, we suddenly SUT TO:

INT. FLECKSTEIN'S OFFICE

Fleckstein is there, quietly gloating. He's talking to someone — someone we don't see. Perhaps he even faces CAMERA.

FLECKSTEIN

... so I think you'll agree it's
time to terminate our arrangement.
Which puts you on the shit-end of
the stick — if you catch my drift.

INT. AUDITORIUM

Caesar is now striding about the stage.

CAESAR

... and men are flesh and blood,
and apprehensive ...

ON JUDITH

Dozing off in her seat.

ON STAGE

Brutus, Cassius, and Casca move closer. Hands clutching knife-hilts.

INT. FLECKSTEIN'S OFFICE

Fleckstein picks up the phone. Taunting:

FLECKSTEIN
Do you want to give me the number or shall I get it from information?
(enjoying
himself)
Can't tell you how long I've
waited for this.

CAMERA SWIVELS toward door. Then returns to Fleckstein's smiling face.

FLECKSTEIN
Go ahead, leave. Doesn't make
any difference to me. Either way,
you're finished.

He turns his back and starts to dial. CAMERA ANGLES TOWARD his dental tray -- with its row of gleaming steel picks and probes. The shadow of a hand drifts over them.

ON STAGE

CAESAR
Cimber should be banish'd, and
constant do remain to keep him
so!

CINNA
O Caesar --

CAESAR
Hence! Wilt thou lift up Plympus?

DECIUS
Great Caesar --

CAESAR
Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

CASCA
Speak, hands, for me!

CONTINUED:

Flailing wildly to disengage his cardboard knife, Casca stabs Caesar in the neck.

QUICK CUT

A probe lashes out and drives into Fleckstein's neck at the base of his skull. The motion is a blur -- we cannot tell if the assailant is a man or a woman. Fleckstein's body stiffens with a jolt. He drops the phone.

ON STAGE

The conspirators all stab Caesar in a swirl of bedsheets. Finally Brutus steps in. Drives home his knife. A bit too realistically.

CAESAR
Hey! Dammit, shithead, watch that!

DRAMA TEACHER
(calling out)
Stick to Shakespeare, Craig.

CAESAR
Et tu, Brute? Then fall, Caesar!

He crashes to the stage like John Wayne in "The Sands of Iwo Jima."

INT. FLECKSTEIN'S OFFICE

Fleckstein clutches at the spot of blood on the back of his neck. Stumbles. His groping hands scatter the instruments. He makes a grab for a tabletop, misses, and topples over. Falling at the foot of the dental chair.

ON JUDITH

Her eyes snap open. She doesn't know where she is for a moment.

ON STAGE

The kids are erupting in all directions.

CONTINUED:

CINNA
Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!

ON CAESAR

Watching it all. His head propped up on his elbow.

FLECKSTEIN'S BODY

Motionless now. We hear the soft sounds of the office door closing.

CUT TO:

INT. SINGER KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Singer brood is gathered at the table, finishing dinner. A doggie gate at the utility room doorway keeps Max from leaping in and devouring their steaks. Judith moves from stove to table and back again, giving their microwave oven a wide birth. BOB SINGER is holding forth. He's a good-looking man in his 30's, ultra-crisp. He's removed his jacket, but he still wears his tie.

BOB
... so I take Lou the Toy King to '21' for lunch and I tell him the truth. Saucy Suzette and her little black soul sister Kool Karla have a tendency to disintegrate every time a kid takes off their Naughty-Nighty-Negligees. I mean, we're stuck with doing a p. r. whitewash on a defective product.

JUDITH
You could always sell them as ten-dollar amputees.

BOB
Judith, it's not funny.

JUDITH
Well, you'll think of something.

CONTINUED:

CINNA
Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!

ON CAESAR

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BOB
Judith, it's not funny.

JUDITH
Well, you'll think of something.

CONTINUED:

BOB
I'd better. How was your day?

JUDITH
I had a tooth filled.

BOB
Oh, and then Larry took off for two weeks at Stowe and I'm saddled with the Macnamara account.

JUDITH
It still hurts.

BOB
Which is an open invitation to cardiac arrest. The only way to satisfy those guys --
(he pauses)
Why are you doing that?

JUDITH
Doing what?

BOB
Walking in circles.

KATE
She's keeping away from the microwave.

BOB
What?

JUDITH
They're -- uh -- supposed to be dangerous. There's a book out. They cause leukemia in laboratory rats.

BOB
Judith, for Christ sake!

JUDITH
It's true.

BOB
I doubt very much whether a major American corporation like General Electric is going to install a death machine in my kitchen. And
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

BOB (Cont'd)

anyway, the damn thing is turned off.

Judith giggles.

BOB

What?

JUDITH

I was just thinking. Maybe Saucy Suzette and Kool Karla do their cooking on a microwave. That's why they fall apart.

Sally

Before Bob can respond, Joey is caught trying to sneak a Mallomar from his sister's plate.

KATE

Hey, dum-dum, that's mine!

JOEY

(retalliating)

Chicken-doody-faggot!

BOB

Where the hell does he learn that stuff?

JUDITH

Probably from us. Come on, gang, it's bedtime.

JOEY

I wanna play with my puppets.

BOB

Manana, tiger. Hit the sack.

KATE

He too?

JUDITH

You too. All small people upstairs. And brush your teeth.

Grumbling, they push back their chairs. Bob gets up.

BOB

I want to do some enlarging in the darkroom. Save me a cup of coffee, will you?

CONTINUED:

He and the kids go out. Within seconds Judith is alone. With the dishes.

INT. JOEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's later and Joey is asleep. Judith kisses him on the forehead, adjusts the covers, and leaves the room.

INT. UPPER HALL

as she crosses to her daughter's room.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM

Kate is still awake. Judith sails her a kiss from the doorway.

KATE
Mom? What was that thing you were doing today? It looked like you were taking a test.

JUDITH
I guess I was.

KATE
You going back to school?

JUDITH
(smiles)
No ... There's this kind of group where people with high I.Q.'s get together. If you pass a test you become a member.

KATE
Do you have a high I.Q.?

JUDITH
I used to.

KATE
What do they do, have parties?

JUDITH
Go to sleep, honey. See you in the morning.

INT. HALL

as Judith comes out and heads for the stairs. Finding, to her surprise, that she's vaguely depressed.

EXT. SINGER HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a split-level Tudor on a quiet suburban street. A car turns the corner. Cruising slowly. It comes to a stop by the front mailbox.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The driver checks the address against a notebook. Satisfied, he tucks the book in his pocket and turns off the ignition. His name is NELSON SHARPE — a nice-looking young man in need of a shave, some sleep, and a hot bowl of chicken-noodle soup. He gets out of the car.

INT. SINGER HOUSE

Downstairs now, Judith passes the closed bathroom door where a DO NOT DISTURB sign cribbed from the Plaza hangs on the knob. Bob is closeted inside with his photographic paraphanalia. Judith goes into the kitchen and begins stacking plates and glasses in the dishwasher. The front doorbell RINGS. Puzzled, she goes to answer it.

NEW ANGLE - FOYER

She latches the chain and opens the door, peering out at Nelson Sharpe.

NELSON
Mrs. Singer? Mrs. Judith Singer?

JUDITH
Yes?

He holds up an embossed card.

NELSON
My name is Nelson Sharpe. Nassau County Police. May I come in?

JUDITH
Did you say police?

CONTINUED:

NELSON

Yes, ma'am.

JUDITH

Uh — just a sec.

She turns on the porch light and takes another look at his card.

NELSON

Boy, are you suspicious.

JUDITH

Well, you never know. I mean, you could be selling magazines or something. Anyway, if you're the police you're supposed to tell me not to let strangers in the house.

NELSON

You're right. But I'm really not a stranger, I'm Nekson Sharpe, Nassau County Police. Now may I please come in? It's cold out here.

JUDITH

Oh. Sorry.

She unchains the door and as he enters she takes a good look at him. His jacket and trousers are in need of a pressing.

JUDITH

Well, you're certainly not the Avon lady.

NELSON

Pardon?

JUDITH

Look, if it's about that parking ticket —

NELSON

I'm from Homicide, Mrs. Singer.

JUDITH

Homicide? Are you sure you've got the right person? Maybe you should talk to my husband —

CONTINUED:

NELSON
I'd rather talk to you, ma'am. And could I please have a cup of coffee?

JUDITH
(bewildered)
Uh — sure.

NEW ANGLE

as she leads him into the kitchen, where the dog immediately begins barking at the new arrival.

JUDITH
Shut up, Max.
(to Nelson)
Excuse the mess. How do you take it?

NELSON
Black.
(beat)
Mrs. Singer, you were a patient of Dr. Bruwe M. Fleckstein, weren't you?

JUDITH
Well, not really a patient. I was a referral. I just saw him this after —
(beat)
Why?

NELSON
He's dead, ma'am. He was murdered.

Judith stares at him.

JUDITH
Murdered!? But — that's awful! Who — ?

NELSON
We don't know. Please — no cream.

Half-dazed, Judith was about to pour milk in his cup. She hands it to him and he takes a grateful sip.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

When did it happen?

NELSON

Late this afternoon. Sometime between five-thirty and six-thirty.

JUDITH

How — ?

NELSON

He was stabbed at the base of the neck with one of his dental instruments. Unfortunately, the weapon wasn't left at the scene ... Now according to his appointment book, you were his last patient — and that means you were probably the last person to see him alive.

JUDITH

Well — except for the murderer.

NELSON

Yes. Except for the murderer. Where did you go after you left the doctor's office?

JUDITH

Shorehaven Elementary. My kids were rehearsing in a school play.

NELSON

Anyone see you?

JUDITH

Sure. Brutus, Cassius, and half the Roman Senate.

He looks at her blankly.

JUDITH

They were doing "Julius Caesar."

NELSON

Oh. And you came right home with your kids?

JUDITH

That's right. Listen, I hope you're going around to all of his patients. Or is it just me?

CONTINUED:

NELSON
(smiles)
We're talking to everybody, ma'am. And that reminds me — your neighbor across the street is a Mrs ... Tuccio. Is that correct?

JUDITH
Yes, Marilyn. Why?

NELSON
She was a patient of Dr. Fleckstein's. Matter of fact, she saw him this morning. We understand from the nurse that the two of them had an argument.

JUDITH
Marilyn Tuccio? Argue? She hasn't raised her voice since she was in labor. Have you talked to her?

NELSON
They're not at home. The maid says she and her husband went into New York to see a show.

JUDITH
Do you want one?

NELSON
Mm?

JUDITH
You've been staring at those Mallomars.

NELSON
Well — maybe just one.

JUDITH
(gives it to him)
You didn't have dinner tonight, did you? I've got some leftover steak —

NELSON
Thanks, but I still have some people to see. Ah ... Dr. Fleckstein's nurse — Miss Lewis — she
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (Cont'd)

says she left when you did. Is that true?

JUDITH

I guess so. I mean, she didn't have time to run back in and stab him in the neck.

NELSON

Did I say he was stabbed in the neck?

JUDITH

Now that's pretty sneaky, Lieutenant. Of course you said it. The base of the neck, to be exact.

NELSON

Yeah, I guess I did. Sorry. I shouldn't ask questions when I'm tired.

(puts down cup)

Well, thanks for the coffee and cookies. That's about it for now. We may be calling you again.

JUDITH

Whenever you want.

NEW ANGLE

as they walk to the front door.

NELSON

Was there anything you noticed — anything out of the ordinary? Did he make any calls, mention anybody's name — ?

JUDITH

No ... I don't think so.

NELSON

What about his mood?

JUDITH

He seemed fine. Actually, he was pretty chipper.

CONTINUED:

NELSON

If something occurs to you -- even if it seems trivial -- call me at this number. Okay?

He hands her a card and opens the door. Judith slips the box of Mallomars into his hand.

JUDITH

Here. A little snack between suspects.

He gives her a genuine grin.

NELSON

Thanks.

The two of them stand there enjoying each other. Then he goes out.

NEW ANGLE

Excited, she hurries through the house to Bob's darkroom. Barges in without knocking.

INT. DARKROOM

Bob's sleeves are rolled up and he's adjusting the lens on his enlarger. Undeveloped photographs swim in a hypo tray. Everything is bathed in the red glow of a safety lamp -- until Judith's sudden entrance blares in light from outside.

JUDITH
(mile-a-minute)

You'll never guess what happened! An honest-to-God Homicide cop was just here and --

BOB
(furious)

Judith!

She stops dead. Realizing that she's just exposed every frame of film in the room.

JUDITH
(horror-stricken)

Ooops!

CUT TO:

BEDROOM TELEVISION SET

Tuned to the Eleven O'clock News. The ANCHORMAN peers earnestly INTO CAMERA.

ANCHORMAN

... and now a report from Duke Gray, our Long Island correspondent.

A filmed segment of Duke Gray comes into view. He stands in front of the Shorehaven medical building, holding a hand mike. In b.g. are several police cars and an ambulance. A blanket-covered stretcher containing the mortal remains of Bruce Fleckstein is being trundled down the steps.

GRAY

Hi, Jim. I'm speaking to you from the little town of Shorehaven, where just over an hour ago the body of a local dentist, Dr. Bruce M. Fleckstein, was discovered — brutally murdered — in his office.

ON JUDITH

In bed, propped against pillows, utterly absorbed. The bathroom door is open and we hear the sounds of Bob vigorously brushing his teeth.

BACK TO SET

GRAY

... at this early stage of the investigation there appear to be no definite leads, but the Nassau County authorities have moved in and will be working with the Shorehaven police. That's it for now, Jim. Back to you.

For a brief moment before the report ends, there is a flash of Nelson Sharpe standing with the other officials.

ON JUDITH

Delighted. She snaps off the set with a remote control gadget and calls toward the bathroom.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
I just saw him! He was on TV.

BOB'S VOICE
(o.s.)
Who?

JUDITH
The cop who was here tonight.

Bob emerges from the bathroom. Bare-chested. Wearing only his pajama bottoms.

BOB
Who the hell would want to kill a dentist?

JUDITH
It's funny ... I was thinking ... his last filling is in my mouth ...
(thoughtful)
I'll bet this is the first murder around here in years. Or maybe it's the first murder ever.

BOB
Does it matter?

JUDITH
Well, it's interesting.

Bob has been moving around the room. Turning off lights.

JUDITH
What are you doing?

BOB
I guess I'm ... kinda in the mood.
(smiles)
Are you in the mood?

He sits on the edge of the bed and lets his fingers trail along her neck and shoulder. She responds.

JUDITH
Mmmm ...

He begins biting her on the ear.

JUDITH
Yeeeee ...

CONTINUED:

BOB
Like that?

JUDITH
Love it.

BOB
Hey, honey?

JUDITH
Mm?

BOB
Let's do it on the floor.

JUDITH
The floor?

BOB
The floor.

JUDITH
Why not?

They get out of bed and arrange themselves on the bedroom rug. CAMERA MOVES CLOSER. They snuggle. Kiss. Then:

BOB
Maybe we'd better get back in bed.

JUDITH
Huh?

BOB
There's a draft.

JUDITH
Oh. Okay.

They clamber into bed and Judith pulls up the covers. After a few moments of mutual stroking —

BOB
Damn!

JUDITH
What?

BOB
Sorry, but I have a meeting with
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

BOB (Cont'd)
Macnamara tomorrow and I've got to remember to take in the demographics. Better leave myself a note.

He leans over her, rummages around in the night table drawer, and comes up with a pad and pencil. Turns on the light. Scrawls something. Turns off the light.

BOB
There ...
(looks down at her)
Ready?

JUDITH
Fire away.

His lips trace a tender trail toward her breast. Then he pauses.

BOB
You know ... if the Naughty Negligee was attached — I mean really glued on — then the kids wouldn't try to undress them and they wouldn't break ...
(shakes his head)
Ah, the hell with it.

He goes back to what he was doing. CAMERA MOVES IN ON Judith's eyes. Open now. All passion gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SINGER HOUSE - MORNING

A Honda Civic crammed with kids pulls into the driveway and honks its horn. A young and hasseled MOTHER is at the wheel. Judith, a bathrobe over her nightgown, opens the front door and shepherds Kate and Joey toward the car.

JUDITH
Morning.

YOUNG MOTHER
Morning. Running late — as usual.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Sounds familiar.
(kisses her kids)
Have a good day.

She opens the door and they squeeze inside, exchanging raucous greetings with the others.

JUDITH
Put on your seat belts!

Bulging, the car backs down the drive and zips off. Judith scans the lawn until she sees her rolled-up copy of the New York Times. She stoops to retrieve it. Avidly peels off the rubber band and hunts through the paper until she's rewarded by:

INSERT SHOT - PAGE IN THE SECOND SECTION

A short squib with the headline: DENTIST FOUND SLAIN.

BACK TO JUDITH

It's not much of an article. Disappointed, she closes the paper and then looks up as a garage door across the street electronically opens. A car backs down the drive, plastered with bumper stickers that advise us to go to church on Sunday, hug our kids, and turn thumbs down on fluoride. Judith hurries over, waving her hand.

JUDITH
Marilyn!

NEW ANGLE

as MARILYN TUCCIO draws abreast of her and rolls down the window. Marilyn is Super-Mother, a supremely competent-looking woman who could handily win three prizes in a row at the Pillsbury Bakeoff.

MARILYN
Good morning, Judith. Lovely day.

JUDITH
Listen, did the police get to you last night?

CONTINUED:

MARILYN
The police?

JUDITH
They were over here talking to me, and since you were a patient too —

MARILYN
Judith, what are you talking about?

JUDITH
I guess you haven't heard. Dr. Fleckstein. Somebody killed him.

Marilyn's mouth drops open and her face goes ashen. It's a reaction out of all proportion to the news.

JUDITH
Marilyn? Are you all right?

MARILYN
I — don't believe it. When?

JUDITH
Yesterday.

MARILYN
Did they get the person — ?

JUDITH
Uh-uh. They don't know who it is. Marilyn, can I make you some coffee? You look a little —

MARILYN
No, I'm reading for the blind this morning. I have to run ...
(agitated)
I'll — talk to you later.

With an abrupt lurch, her car jolts off. Judith watches her go, perplexed, then shrugs and turns back to her house. But a moment later there's an o.s. CRASH and she jerks around.

HER POV - MARILYN'S CAR

It's jumped up over the curb at the end of the block, shearing off a fire hydrant. A geyser of water billows skyward.

BACK TO JUDITH

Running in the direction of the accident. Robe flapping.

NEW ANGLE

Marilyn is rattled but unharmed. Gritting her teeth, she shifts into reverse and backs off the curb. Almost hitting Judith. She jams on the brakes.

JUDITH

Marilyn! Are you hurt?

MARILYN

No. I'm — fine.

The fountain of water continues to spray into the air. Unabated. It looks like Old Faithful.

JUDITH

What happened?

MARILYN

I must've lost control of the wheel. Look — can you do me a big favor? Call the fire department and get them to turn that damn thing off. I just can't wait around.

JUDITH

But —

MARILYN

Thanks.

She wrestles with the gear and zig-zags off. Crumpled fender and all.

ON JUDITH

Standing there in complete bewilderment as several neighbors come out of their houses. The direction of the wind has changed and she realizes she's getting soaked.

CUT TO:

CUISINART

Reducing a piece of food to smithereens.

CONTINUED:

VOICE
... add liquids last, always through the feed tube with the machine running. You'll find your processor can be as creative as you are -- providing, of course, you exercise simple safety precautions.

WIDER ANGLE

A semi-circle of women, Judith among them, is taking a class in the rear of a gourmet cooking shoppe. Their TEACHER, a chunky lady with at least three chins, is initiating them into the mysteries of the Cuisinart. Piles of fish and breadcrumbs lie on a chopping block by her side.

TEACHER
(continuing)
For example -- never, never introduce food by hand. That's the major no-no. Always use your pusher. Any questions?
(glances around)
All right, then, we'll proceed to our basic quenelles. We'll need 12 ounces, or one and a half cups, of fresh raw seafood ...

Judith's concentration is broken by someone signalling to her from across the table. She looks up to see MARY ALICE MAHONEY, a boyish blonde with a pixie haircut. Mary Alice is pantomiming something and Judith doesn't understand. Frustrated, Mary Alice waits until the processor begins grinding away. Then slips around the periphery of the group and draws Judith aside.

NEW ANGLE

MARY ALICE
(a shrill whisper)
I have to talk to you!

JUDITH
Now? We're in the middle of a class.

CONTINUED:

MARY ALICE
Can we meet somewhere? It's very important.

JUDITH
Well, look, Mary Alice, I'm kind of tied up today —

MARY ALICE
Judith, it's life and death —

The Cuisinart has stopped and Mary Alice's last three words boom out. She glances around guiltily.

TEACHER
... now dip two teaspoons in cold water and use them to form little football shapes of batter ...

Unable to contain herself, Mary Alice pulls Judith over to a corner stacked with copper pots and pans.

MARY ALICE
It's about the murder. Naturally you've heard.

JUDITH
What have you got to do with — wait a minute. Did you know him? Dr. Fleckstein?

MARY ALICE
Know him? Oh, yes.
(bitterly)
Very, very well.

JUDITH
(interested)
Really?

MARY ALICE
Please, Judith. Meet me at three o'clock.

JUDITH
Well ... all right. Where?

MARY ALICE
We can't talk at my house — Keith's working with the contractor. And I meditate during lunch. I know! Let's
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

MARY ALICE (Cont'd)
go to Trim n' Slim. It's not crowded in the afternoons. And bring Nancy.

JUDITH
Nancy?

MARY ALICE
I know she doesn't like me, but I have a great deal of respect for her intelligence.

JUDITH
But ---

TEACHER
(calling over)
Ladies. Please!

MARY ALICE
Sorry.
(to Judith. Another whisper)
Three o'clock.

And they both return to the group. Judith, however, is no longer interested in quenelles. She glances at Mary Alice. Intrigued.

EXT. SHOREHAVEN SHOPPING CENTER - DAY

as Judith's station wagon approaches.

INT. STATION WAGON

Judith is at the wheel. Beside her sits NANCY McLAREN, a very cool, very attractive brunette.

NANCY
I really don't know why I'm here. Mary Alice Mahoney is one dumb cunt.

JUDITH
Nancy, she likes you.

NANCY
I hated her in college and I hate her now. The only reason she wants
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NANCY (Cont'd)
me around is that she can't play to an audience of one.

JUDITH
Just put it down as a personal favor to me.

Just a small
in the [illegible]

NANCY
Oh, I will.

NEW ANGLE

Judith wheels into a parking lot behind the shopping center and looks for an empty stall. The entrance to the Trim n' Slim, a health spa, is just ahead.

INT. CAR.

JUDITH
Anyway, she said she knew Dr. Fleckstein, so it should be interesting.

NANCY
Nothing Malice has to say is interesting. And as for your perverted fascination with this murder --

JUDITH
It is not perverted --

NANCY
-- which is merely a sublimation of your hidden desire to have an extra-marital affair --

JUDITH
Dammit, Nancy --

NANCY
-- I'm afraid there's not much of a mystery. Fleckstein was reputed to be one of the biggest cocksmen on Long Island. He was obviously killed by one of his fuckees.

JUDITH
For what reason?

CONTINUED:

NANCY
Who knows? Maybe he wouldn't go down on her.

JUDITH
That's not a reason to kill somebody.

NANCY
It most certainly is.

Judith has parked. She turns off the ignition and opens the door.

INT. TRIM N' SLIM - DAY

The two of them, having changed into leotards, enter the gymnasium area. It's a large, sunny room with the usual equipment -- parallel bars, weights, slant boards -- and at this hour there are not many women present. Those who are seem lost in their own private worlds of physical fitness -- housewives of various shapes and sizes, working out to tighten thighs and flatten tummies. Mary Alice unfolds from a Lotus position.

MARY ALICE
Judith! Nancy! Thanks so much for coming. Truly, you're sisters in every sense of the word.

Nancy winces. Mary Alice leads them to a private corner.

MARY ALICE
I think maybe we should exercise so no one will pay any attention.

NANCY
For God's sake, Mary Alice --

MARY ALICE
Please!

Judith picks up a 12-pound barbell and Nancy, with great reluctance, settles into a rowing machine. Mary Alice resumes her Lotus position.

JUDITH
Okay, now, what's all this about life and death?

CONTINUED:

MARY ALICE
It's not going to be easy to tell you. I suppose I should begin at the beginning.

NANCY
Good choice.

MARY ALICE
I was a ... patient of Bruce's — Dr. Fleckstein's. I went in for some simple scaling —

NANCY
How graphic.

MARY ALICE
— and from the first moment I sat in his chair there was — I don't know — electricity between us. We were like two magnetic forces ... drawn together as if by Natural Law —

NANCY
It's after three, Mary Alice, and I have to leave by four — even if you're in the middle of your first soul kiss.

MARY ALICE
(sweetly)
Nancy, you of all people should know what it's like being attracted to someone who's not your husband.

NANCY
Listen, you asshole —

JUDITH
Nancy, shut up!
(to Mary Alice)
You're digressing, Mary Alice, and that makes Nancy exceedingly pissed.

MARY ALICE
I just wanted you to have a feeling for the dynamics of the relationship. Anyway, he asked me if I'd have lunch with him. So I met him the next day at Wong Foo's — the Szechuan place.

CONTINUED:

NANCY
Right next door to the Tudor Rose Motor Inn.

MARY ALICE
Yes. But it never occurred to me that anything would happen that day ... We ordered a lot of spicy food — I don't think we ate very much — and then he looked at me and said, "You turn me on." Well, one thing led to another, and we didn't even finish lunch. We just walked out.

NANCY
And nipped next door to the motel.

MARY ALICE
Yes.

JUDITH
And then what happened?

MARY ALICE
Nothing. We did it. That's all.

CUT TO:

INT. SAUNA - DAY

The three, wrapped in sheets, are sitting on redwood ledges. Their conversation continues without a break.

NANCY
I gather you didn't do this just once?

MARY ALICE
No. We met every Tuesday at the motel. It lasted for six months and it was wonderful. Bruce was into TM and he encouraged me to go to the est seminars — I can't tell you the doors he opened for me.

NANCY
I can think of one.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Mary Alice — why are you telling us this?

MARY ALICE
I just felt I had to share it. After all, the three of us went to college together —

JUDITH
We hardly knew each other. Now there's got to be something else. You didn't kill him, did you?

MARY ALICE
(aghast)
Certainly not!

JUDITH
Then what's bugging you?

MARY ALICE
(reluctant)
Well ...

NANCY
(pressing)
Come on, Mary Alice. Let it all hang out.

MARY ALICE
He ... he took some pictures.

JUDITH
Pictures?

MARY ALICE
(nods)
Pictures of me.
(her voice breaks)
N-naked. And more.

NANCY
Holy shit!

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM

Half-dressed, they're applying make-up. Nancy is working on her hair with a blow-dryer and a brush. Their conver-

CONTINUED:

sation continues without a break.

MARY ALICE
(miserable)
... He said that since our relationship was based on mutual trust we should feel free to act out our fantasies. So a couple of times he brought a rope and ... tied me up.

JUDITH
(incredulous)
Tied you up?

MARY ALICE
He brought clothesline ... and a cat-of-nine-tails ... in an attache case.

JUDITH
You mean he -- hit you?

MARY ALICE
Just a little. But he was always careful not to hurt me -- or leave any marks that Keith would see.

NANCY
Get back to the pictures.

MARY ALICE
He said that these were sacred moments and he wanted to preserve them. He got this new Polaroid camera for his birthday and he took some photographs of me ... you know ... kind of tied down on the bed. He said he'd burn them after he looked at them a few times.

NANCY
Why would he burn them if he wanted to preserve your sacred moments?

MARY ALICE
(starting to cry)
I don't know, Nancy. Oh, Jesus, God, I'm so scared. What if the police find them? What if they show them to Keith?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
(gently)
Mary Alice, calm down. Maybe there's nothing to worry about. Maybe he did burn them.

MARY ALICE
Y-you think so? I once asked him and he told me to stop being paranoid.

JUDITH
Have the police talked to you since the murder?

MARY ALICE
No. I haven't seen Bruce for months. I go to another dentist now.

JUDITH
Then they probably haven't found them. Assuming they still exist. Just stay cool and don't tell anyone else about this.

MARY ALICE
(sniffling)
I can't imagine why someone would've killed him. He was such a sweet and gentle man.

NANCY
In spite of his whips and chains.

MARY ALICE
Well he was. You just don't understand.

NANCY
Mary Alice, that sweet and gentle man plowed through this town like a stud bull.

MARY ALICE
All right, I'm not naive. I'm sure there were others. But Bruce and I had something special.

Nancy starts to laugh.

CONTINUED:

MARY ALICE

It's not funny.

NANCY

I was just wondering ... How many *other* Polaroid pinups do you suppose Brucie took?

JUDITH

Do you really think — ?

NANCY

Absolutely.

(grins)

Must be a lot of very worried ladies in Shorehaven today.

They look at each other in the mirror. Mary Alice appalled. Nancy amused. And Judith more and more intrigued.

INT. NANCY'S BASEMENT STUDIO - DAY

Nancy sits on a stool in the reconverted basement of her home. Working on a painting with strong erotic overtones. At her elbow is a glass and a chilled bottle of Chablis. The room is a haphazard gallery of stretchers and standing canvasses. Pinned to a cork bulletin board are snapshots of her husband Larry and her two young children. Judith paces nearby. Pondering.

JUDITH

... you know, the more I think about it the more I'm sure you're right. That was probably his M.O. —

NANCY

M.O.? My Lord, we've been watching 'Dragnet' re-runs.

JUDITH

(ignoring her)

Lunch at Wong Foos, fun and games at the motel, and then click! click! He must've taken pictures of all of them.

(she pauses)

Hey! Maybe that's why Marilyn was so upset.

NANCY

You mean your neighbor, the Great American Mother?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
She drove right into a fire hydrant when I told her about the murder. And she was a patient of his.
(beat)
No, I can't believe it. She's not the type.

NANCY
(sipping her wine)
Everybody's the type. Except you.

JUDITH
(annoyed)
Nancy, do you have to drink wine in the middle of the afternoon?

NANCY
Uh-huh. I enjoy it. I also enjoy painting and screwing around. So stop trying to reform me. Just because you don't have any vices —

JUDITH
(stung)
That's not true!

NANCY
Judith, you've had a Sara Lee chocolate cake in your freezer for over a year. Have you eaten it?

JUDITH
Well ... no. But that doesn't prove anything. I can eat whatever I want. It's just that Bob says fat women are a turn-off.

NANCY
And we mustn't upset Bob, must we? If you can't even swill down a chocolate cake, don't talk to me about vices.

JUDITH
You have enough for the two of us.

NANCY
(raising her glass)
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NANCY (Cont'd)

I'll drink to that. And come to think of it, one of my vices might even help you out. You've apparently got a bug up your ass about this murder —

JUDITH

Not really ...

NANCY

For Christ sake, Judith, you've been coming on like Nancy Drew all day. But if you really don't give a shit —

JUDITH

All right, I am interested. Sort of. Go on.

NANCY

Remember that cop, Jim Hogan?

JUDITH

No.

NANCY

Sure you do. The local patrolman. He came over here when my burglar alarm went off last Christmas. And stayed. And stayed.

JUDITH

Cupcake!

NANCY

Exactly. Dear, gorgeous, stupid Cupcake. I haven't seen him in ages, but if you like I can give him a call and he'll come panting over in his cute little radio car. And while we're heave-hoing, I'll pick his microbe of a brain and find out what the cops are up to.

JUDITH

Terriffic. It might even help Mary Alice. I mean, Cupcake might know if they found her pictures.

(beat)

No, wait a minute. No good.

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Why not?

JUDITH

It's sordid. I can't ask you to sleep with somebody just to get information for me.

NANCY

You're not asking. I'm volunteering. And Cupcake was rather good, as I recall.

JUDITH

(slightly shocked)

Nancy!

NANCY

Don't be judgemental. I love my husband, but everybody needs a hobby.

She pours another glass of wine and holds it out to Judith.

NANCY

Here.

JUDITH

I have to go home and make dinner —

NANCY

(an order)

Here!

Frowning, Judith takes the glass. Swallows a mouthful.

NANCY

Well ... at least it's a start.

INT. SINGER KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dinner is over and the kids are in bed. Judith sits at the table amid a clutter of dishes, sipping coffee and reading Newsday. She gets up, still studying the paper, and goes into the other room.

NEW ANGLE

as she approaches the closed door of Bob's darkroom. The

CONTINUED:

DO NOT DISTURB SIGN dangles from the know.

JUDITH
It says in the paper that Fleckstein was married for twenty years. His wife's name is Norma. ... Bob?

Her husband's voice comes from inside.

BOB'S VOICE
I know.

JUDITH
You know?

BOB'S VOICE
I see her at the club. She plays a lot of golf.

JUDITH
What's she like?

BOB'S VOICE
One of those pulled together ladies that you hate so much. Do we have to keep talking about this?

JUDITH
Well, it's more interesting than 'Sesame Street! and Spaghetti-O's. Besides, it's not nice to kill people. It offends me. And it's close to home.

BOB'S VOICE
Not close to my home. Now will you please watch TV or something? I'm trying to get this stuff done.

JUDITH
How long will you be?

BOB'S VOICE
Half-hour. The shots of you at Joey's party are terriffic.

JUDITH
I'm`sort of down on photographs right now.

CONTINUED:

BOB'S VOICE

What?

JUDITH

Nothing.

She turns away from the door, not quite sure what to do with herself, and wanders aimlessly into the living room. She glances at the television set with a decided lack of enthusiasm. Sighs. Then crosses to the front draperies to close them. As she starts to pull the cord she sees:

HER POV - THROUGH WINDOW - TUCCIO HOUSE

It's dark -- but suddenly there's a tiny gleam of illumination. As if from a pencil flashlight.

ON JUDITH

Reacting. Was it the reflection of moonlight on a pane of glass?

HER POV - TUCCIO HOUSE

Another flicker. Obviously not moonlight. It bobs around the side of the house toward the back yard.

ON JUDITH

Concerned now. She goes to the phone and dials Marilyn's number. It rings, but there's no answer. She hangs up, thinking. Finally, she crosses to the hall closet, grabs a sweater, and leaves the house.

EXT. SINGER HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a cold and quiet night. Pulling on the sweater, she walks down her front drive to the curb and pauses, waiting for the light to reappear. Nothing. She debates with herself for a moment and then, making up her mind, she goes across the street and up the driveway of the Tuccio house.

NEW ANGLE

as she goes around the side. Somewhat tentative now.

NEW ANGLE

The Tuccio's back yard is complete with fenced-in pool, shade trees, a set of swings for the children, and a playhouse. The moon is behind clouds now and the yard is in almost total darkness. Judith steps on something. Startled, she bends down to pick it up, but it's only a child's plastic laser gun. She smiles to herself — and then freezes at the sound of an o.s. CREAK. She wheels around.

HER POV - SWING

It's moving ever so slowly back and forth. As if someone has just brushed against it.

BACK TO JUDITH

Frightened. She peers into the darkness.

JUDITH
Anybody there ... ? Marilyn —
is that you?

No response. She moves cautiously toward the swing. Touches it with her finger until it stops. A light wind has come up and she wonders if it set the swing in motion. She looks toward:

HER POV - PANNING SHOT

The line of trees that borders the property. The wind rustles the branches, but there is no sign of anyone hiding.

BACK TO JUDITH

Beginning to feel foolish. She listens for another moment or two, shrugs, and starts back the way she came. And then gasps.

HER POV - PLAYHOUSE

ZOOM IN ON the open window. Someone is standing inside. Looking out at her.

BACK TO JUDITH

Rooted to the lawn. But then, after a few beats, she realizes that the figure isn't moving — there's something not quite human about it. She takes a hesitant step toward the playhouse. Then another. Moving closer and closer to the window.

NEW ANGLE

as she finally sees what frightened her. It's from a record store — a life-size cutout of Donny Osmond.

ON JUDITH

Laughing out loud. But nevertheless relieved. Until she hears a motor start up beyond the line of trees and the sound of a car quietly pulling away.

CUT TO:

TRAIN - DAY

Chugging into the Shorehaven station. A group of commutors — all of them men and all with their copies of the Times — waits on the platform for their morning hegira to Manhattan. There's a hissing of steam and the squeaking of iron wheels.

PARKING LOT

as Judith's car swings in near the station entrance. Bob is beside her on the front seat. Other cars stop around them as wives drop off their husbands.

INT. STATION WAGON

Bob leans over to give her a kiss.

BOB
I should be home about seven.
Any later and I'll call you.

JUDITH
Fine.

CONTINUED:

BOB

And make sure that Nazi comes over to look at my car. The battery's fine, but the damn motor won't turn over.

He opens the door and then pauses. Looks at her.

BOB

Listen, I've been a pain in the ass lately.

(as she starts to protest)

No, I have. Too much work, I guess. Next month we'll clear out and go somewhere without the kids. Okay?

(blows her a kiss)

Love you.

JUDITH

Love you too.

He closes the door and sprints up the steps toward the platform. She waits until he's climbed aboard the train and then backs out and heads homeward.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

as the station wagon skims along by the waters of the Sound. Boats are bobbing in the distance and improbably vast estates can be glimpsed on the opposite shoreline. OVER THIS, the VOICE of a local newscaster on her radio.

NEWSCASTER'S VOICE

... report no new clues in the Fleckstein murder case ...

INT. STATION WAGON

The window is down and Judith's hair blows in the breeze. She's feeling good.

NEWSCASTER'S VOICE

The family has announced that the

(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NEWSCASTER'S VOICE (Cont'd)
funeral will be held tomorrow
at the Baum Brothers Mortuary
in Shorehaven ...

CUT TO:

JUDITH'S STREET

as she turns the corner and sees:

HER POV - POLICE CARS

Parked in front of the Tuccio house. A uniformed officer in on the front lawn, and several others are coming around the side of the house. A few curious neighbors have gathered.

NEW ANGLE

as Judith pulls into her driveway. She parks and hurries across the street.

NEW ANGLE

as she approaches an older MAN who stands watching, a coffee cup in his hand.

JUDITH
Hi, Mr. Strayhorn. What's happening?

STRAYHORN
Dunno. They just got here.

JUDITH
Is Mrs. Tuccio home?

STRAYHORN
If she was, she'd be out here
yelling at 'em. Looks like
they're tearing up her lawn.

Over his shoulder, Judith sees:

HER POV - NELSON SHARPE

Walking around the side of the house in conversation with a police officer. He's wearing the same unpressed suit from the night she met him.

BACK TO SCENE

She excuses herself from Strayhorn just as Sharpe looks up and sees her. He smiles.

NELSON
Mrs. Singer. Good morning.

JUDITH
What's going on?

NELSON
Nothing much. Just routine.

JUDITH
Oh, come on, now. You've got the entire Shorehaven police squad here. Looking for another body?

NELSON
You have quite a vivid imagination. No, nothing like that.

JUDITH
Then what?

NELSON
By the way, thanks for the cookies the other night. They really saved my life.

JUDITH
Inotherwords, you're not going to tell me.
(glances around)
I hope you've got a search warrant.

NELSON
Yes, ma'am. All very legal.

JUDITH
Where's Marilyn?

CONTINUED:

NELSON

We don't know. The maid doesn't speak English.

JUDITH

Come to think of it, I know.

NELSON

Oh?

JUDITH

But I'm not going to tell you. And you really don't want her here, do you? You just want to do your sneaky things while she's not around.

NELSON

Mrs. Singer --

JUDITH

You think Marilyn Tucchio killed Dr. Fleckstein. That's what this is all about, isn't it?

(turns away angrily)

I'm going to get her!

NELSON

Mrs. Singer --

She turns back. Defiant.

JUDITH

What!

NELSON

You're looking very nice.

It's the last thing she expected. She's momentarily flustered. Then pulls herself together.

JUDITH

Thank you. And you're looking for something you're not going to find.

She stalks across the street to her station wagon.

ON NELSON

Watching her. His expression hard to fathom.

INT. SCHOREHAVEN LANGUAGE SCHOOL

A classroom on the ground floor of one of the shopping center buildings. Several women are seated on folding chairs, among them Marilyn Tuccio, for their morning session of Conversational French. A few have casette recorders, and all are armed with pencils and notebooks. There is a blackboard in the front of the room with lists of conjugations and a coffee pot bubbles in a corner. The ladies chat back and forth in French, monitored by their INSTRUCTRESS, a chic young woman wearing a Gucci scarf. The door opens and Judith peers in.

INSTRUCTRESS
(seeing her)
Ah. Bonjour.

JUDITH
Uh -- bonjour. I'm looking for Mrs. Tucchio --

INSTRUCTRESS
En Francais, s'il vour plait.

JUDITH
What?

INSTRUCTRESS
(pleasantly but firmly)
En Francais.

JUDITH
Oh. Pardonnez moi.
(sees Marilyn)
Marilyn -- je veux --
(groping)
-- parler avec vous?

MARILYN
Oui. Continuez.

JUDITH
Uh --
(looks at instructress)
Privately?

CONTINUED:

INSTRUCTRESS
C'est personnel.

JUDITH
Merci.
(to Marilyn)
C'est personnel.

NEW ANGLE

as Marilyn joins her by the coffee pot.

MARILYN
Qu'est-ce que c'est?

JUDITH
Listen, I was just at your house --

INSTRUCTRESS
(calling over)
En Francais, s'il vous plait.

JUDITH
(to Marilyn. A whisper)
Les gendarmes sont chez vous.

MARILYN
(startled)
Qua?

JUDITH
The gendarmes. They're at your maison and they're digging up your jardin!

MARILYN
(stares at her)
Ma maison?

JUDITH
Oui.

CUT TO:

JUDITH'S STATION WAGON

Racing through the streets. OVER THIS:

INT. STATION WAGON

Marilyn's hands are tensely folded in her lap.

MARILYN
I want you to know how much I appreciate this, Judith. You're a good neighbor. If there's any way I can repay you —

JUDITH
Just send me over some of your pumpkin bread.

MARILYN
It's so frustrating not to have a car. They're going to take a week to fix my fender.

JUDITH
Join the club. Bob's car is on the blink again.

MARILYN
What on earth are they _looking_ for?

JUDITH
Marilyn ... Maybe you should call a lawyer.

MARILYN
A lawyer? Why would I need a lawyer?

JUDITH
Because this obviously has something to do with the Fleckstein case. I mean, why else would the Nassau County police be searching your property? And they know you had an argument with him the day he was killed.

MARILYN
That's none of their business!
(beat)
I know who told them. It was that nurse. If anyone's involved in this, _she_ is.

JUDITH
Lorna Lewis?

CONTINUED:

MARILYN

She's been in love with him for years. It's common knowledge. She wanted him to get divorced, but he kept stringing her along.

There is a silence. Marilyn looks down at her hands. Wanting to say something. Then, quietly:

MARILYN

I suppose you've guessed I had an affair with him.

JUDITH

Well ...

MARILYN

It's all right — I'm sure the police know by now.

(shakes her head)

A husband I adore and three children ... It doesn't make any sense. But he was so — attentive. So much energy ...

Judith doesn't say anything. Marilyn sighs.

MARILYN

I haven't been able to go to confession for months ... And it all started so innocently. He took me to lunch one day. At a Chinese restaurant, of all things. He just sat there, staring into my eyes, and told me how attractive I was. I didn't believe a word he said, of course, but somehow —

JUDITH

Somehow you wound up at the Tudor Rose Motel.

Marilyn's head snaps around.

MARILYN

How do you know that?

JUDITH

It's pretty much the way he operated, Marilyn.

(beat)

I even know about the photographs.

CONTINUED:

MARILYN
Oh, my God!

JUDITH
The police may not have seen them yet — if that's any help.

MARILYN
I don't know what possessed me. He insisted it was a matter of mutual trust, and there I was — posing like some girl in a porno magazine. If Mike ever finds out —
(beat)
That's what we were arguing about that day in his office.

JUDITH
The photographs?

MARILYN
I told him if he didn't give them back to me ... I'd kill him.

JUDITH
(gently)
That's why you need a lawyer.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

as Judith pulls into the Tuccio driveway. Everything is back to normal. No evidence of the police.

INT. STATION WAGON

JUDITH
They're gone.

MARILYN
I know a local councilwoman — I think I'll letx her handle this.

She opens the door. Turns back. Worried.

MARILYN
Judith —

JUDITH
Don't even say it. I won't tell a soul.

CONTINUED:

MARILYN
(relieved)
Thanks. Our politics may not be the same, but you're a brick.

She starts to leave the car.

JUDITH
Marilyn — I called you last night. Weren't you home?

MARILYN
Mike and I went to a PTA meeting. Those new school bonds. Didn't Juanita answer?

JUDITH
No.

MARILYN
She probably didn't hear the phone. And the kids were in bed. Why?

JUDITH
Nothing important.
(smiles)
Don't forget that pumpkin loaf.

NEW ANGLE

Marilyn returns the smile, gets out, and walks up the drive toward her house. Judith backs down to the street and zooms away.

CUT TO:

A GLASS OF CHABLIS

On a bedside table. O.S. a soft, sensuous laugh. CAMERA PANS — past a policeman's uniform and holster thrown over a chair — to a window. We are ANGLED DOWN and we can see Judith's station wagon coming to a stop on a large, circular drive below.

EXT. NANCY'S HOUSE - DAY

Lusher than Judith's. More privacy. Lots of foliage

CONTINUED:

screening it from its neighbors' view. Judith leaves the station wagon and goes up to the front door. Without even a second thought she walks right in.

INT. FOYER - DAY

The decor is entirely white -- rugs, furniture, walls. The only spots of color are provided by contemporary graphics. Judith calls into the living room:

JUDITH
Nancy! Where are you? Things are cooking.

She calls again, wondering if anyone is home. And then she sees:

HER POV - FOOT OF STAIRS

Nancy's jeans are discarded on the bottom step. A few steps higher -- her blouse and bikini briefs. And in the middle of the staircase, a man's shoe.

NEW ANGLE

as Judith reacts, embarrassed. From o.s.:

NANCY'S VOICE
You do pop in unexpectedly, don't you?

NEW ANGLE

Nancy appears at the top of the landing. The glass of wine dangles langorously from her fingers. She wears a belted robe and is bare-footed.

JUDITH
Uh -- I'd better come back later.

Nancy descends in her best Scarlett O'Hara manner.

NANCY
Stick around, the damage is done. For a horrible moment I thought you were Larry. Good thing you have a high voice.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
I'm really sorry. I should have called.

NANCY
With me that's usually a good idea.
(turns and calls upstairs)
Jim! Come on down. She won't bite you.
(grins)
Or maybe she will.

NEW ANGLE

as a very sheepish young man, half-in and half-out of his uniform, appears on the landing. He's a good-looking Troy Donahue type, with halfback shoulders and blonde hair. At the moment he seems quietly terrified.

NANCY
Don't be bashful ... Jim, this is my best friend, Judith Singer. Judith, this is Cup — ah — Jim Hogan.

JIM
Uh — hi.

NANCY
She's very discreet. And even though she doesn't have any skeletons in her closet, she'll keep her big mouth shut.

JUDITH
Sure. I mean — none of my business, right?

NANCY
Right.

Jim hops around on the step, trying to put on his shoe.

JIM
I gotta go.

NANCY
Okay, Big Fella. Where'd you park the Batmobile?

CONTINUED:

JIM
Around the corner.

NANCY
Good thinking.

The shoe is now on, but he's tangled up in his holster. He gets things straight finally, glances at Judith, then at Nancy, and goes to the door.

JIM
I'll -- uh -- call you.

NANCY
I'm counting the minutes.

He opens the door. To Judith:

JIM
Nice meeting you.

JUDITH
Same here.

NANCY
Didn't leave anything behind,
did you? No stray bullets in
the sheets?

He's startled for a beat, flushing. Then he realizes she's kidding. He grins at her and goes out. Judith can hardly contain herself. As soon as the door closes:

JUDITH
Are you going to tell me --

NANCY
Patience. Nancy has to whet
her whistle.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

as Nancy uncorks a new bottle. They are at a table by a bay window in the breakfast nook. Outside are trees and hedges. Judith sits over an untasted cup of coffee.

JUDITH
Well?

CONTINUED:

NANCY
(pouring her wine)
Well what?

JUDITH
What did Cupcake say?

NANCY
He said 'Hey, Nancy, baby, how's it going?'

JUDITH
Is that how he talks?

NANCY
No, but that's how he thinks.

JUDITH
So you didn't find out anything.

NANCY
I didn't say that. Look, Cupcake isn't exactly at the epicenter of this investigation. He's one of three local cops. I mean, we don't even have meter maids around here. However --

JUDITH
(hopefully)
However?

NANCY
He _is_ cooperating with Nassau County Homicide. They all are. So he's picked up some random goodies.

JUDITH
Like what?

NANCY
Item: no mention of photographs. If they're stashed away somewhere, they haven't surfaced. Item: Brucie was balling everybody but you and me. All of his female patients are on the suspect list, and most of them don't have alibis.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Boy, you really pumped him dry.

NANCY
I suppose that's one way of putting it.

JUDITH
I didn't mean --

NANCY
(sweetly)
Of course you didn't. You never do. Two more facts. One: for the past half year the late lamented has been withdrawing a thousand a month from his bank account -- always on the last day of the month. With the exception of the day he was killed.

JUDITH
That's interesting.

NANCY
Why?

JUDITH
Because it suggests blackmail. Go on.

NANCY
I've saved the best for last. It seems your neighbor, the virtuous Mrs. Tuccio, is in big trouble. The cops just searched her grounds.

JUDITH
I know about that.

NANCY
Do you know what they found?

JUDITH
Uh-uh.

NANCY
A dental probe. Presumably from Fleckstein's office, and almost certainly the murder weapon. They have it at [illegible] lab right now.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
It's a plant. It's got to be.
Where did they find it?

NANCY
Under some bushes, wrapped in a rag.

JUDITH
How convenient. I suppose they got an anonymous call?

NANCY
(nods)
This morning. Somebody — gender unknown — whispering on the phone through a handkerchief.
(raises her glass)
That's all, folks. This is snitch number X-11, signing off.

JUDITH
Cupcake's a goldmine.

NANCY
In more ways than one.

Judith gets up and circles the kitchen. Deep in thought.

JUDITH
If Marilyn killed him, she'd never leave the weapon in her own back yard ... And where are the pictures? Why haven't they turned up?

NANCY
Questions, questions.

JUDITH
(serious)
Nancy, somehow I feel I can solve this thing. I really do. There's something in the back of my mind — something I saw, or heard, or did — that day when I went to his office. Sooner or later I'm going to put my finger on it.

NANCY
I wouldn't go around advertising
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NANCY (Cont'd)

that. As they say, a murderer is on the loose.

JUDITH

Don't be silly. He doesn't know about me.

NANCY

'He?' How chauvanistic.

(clicks her glass against Judith's coffee cup)

Anyway -- happy hunting.

CUT TO:

EXT. SINGER HOUSE - DAY

as Judith pulls into the garage. She's been shopping -- she hefts several well-stuffed bags from the front seat and juggles them over to the door. At the same time, with what seems to be an extra hand, she digs in her purse for her keys.

CLOSER ANGLE - DOOR

It stands slightly ajar. Judith reacts. She knows damn well she didn't leave it unlocked.

INT. HOUSE

as she enters. And looks around -- horrified. The drawers have been yanked out of the living room desk, their contents spilled on the rug. Magazines have been swept from the coffee table. She hurries into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

All of the papers have been turn from the bulletin board. Maks, behind his gate, is barking up a storm.

VARIOUS SHOTS

as Judith runs through the house. Only to find more of the same: someone has systematically searched the place.

CONTINUED:

Personal correspondence is strewn about. An old briefcase of Bob's has been emptied on the bed and several of her purses have been ransacked. Litter everywhere. Judith suddenly realizes she's still carrying the shopping bags. She sets them down, hurries to a phone, and begins dialing.

CUT TO:

EXT. SINGER HOUSE

Later. Now the police cars are in front of Judith's house. A Shorehaven taxi tears around the corner and jolts to a stop. Bob jumps out. Flings some bills at the driver.

INT. KITCHEN

Judith sits at the table with an older, white-haired police officer named BROWN. Also present is Cupcake. He's supervising a fingerprint team. Occasionally making eye contact with Judith -- as if he hopes she knows enough to keep her mouth buttoned about his matinee with Nancy.

BROWN

... I don't mind telling you, ma'am, this is very weird. If there was no money or jewelry taken, then what the hell was the guy looking for?

JUDITH

I told you. I don't know.

BROWN

Ma'am, you're not being very helpful.

JIM

Hey, go easy, Sid. The lady's had a shock.

JUDITH

Thank you, officer.

They exchange a glance. Then, from the living room.

CONTINUED:

BOB'S VOICE

Judith — !

JUDITH

Bob!

She gets up and hurries from the kitchen.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Another technician is crouched at the desk, dusting for prints. Bob stands there, bewildered, looking at the trail of papers. Judith runs into his arms.

JUDITH

Am I glad to see you!

BOB

Where are the kids?

JUDITH

Over at Marilyn's.

BOB

Jesus, what a mess. You're sure they didn't get any of my cameras?

JUDITH

I don't think so.

BOB

How'd they get in? You didn't leave the door open, did you?

JUDITH

(annoyed)

No, I didn't leave the door open. The cops said the lock was forced. And it probably wasn't a 'they.'

BOB

How do you know that?

JUDITH

I just do. My hunch is that it was just one person acting along.

BOB

Judith, you sound like a B movie. What's going on around here?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Well ... all of this can't just be a coincidence. It has to tie in with the Fleckstein murder.

BOB
The Fleckstein murder? What the hell does that have to do with us? And who broke into my house?

JUDITH
Point of information, Robert. We own this house jointly.

BOB
Is that supposed to be relevent to this conversation? Judith, you're not making any sense!

JUDITH
All right. Calm down. I was just doing a little ... investigating. Nothing serious.

BOB
Investigating?!

JUDITH
You know ... asking around. Checking a few things out.

BOB
Have you lost your mind? Investigating! I don't believe I'm hearing this.

JUDITH
Look, you get excited by Saucy Suzette; I'm fascinated by a good murder. It's a matter of taste. You do your thing, I do mine.

BOB
My thing, as you call it, happens to be my profession. Your thing is being a wife and mother. And going back to graduate school, if you ever get around to it. All of which precludes detective work.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
I spoke to a few people involved in the case. I was curious, that's all. No harm done.

BOB
No harm done? Look around you.

JUDITH
That's not fair.

BOB
Judith -- I want you to get your priorities readjusted. Immediately. Have you told the police about this -- Fleckstein connection?

JUDITH
I will. But not until I have more information.

BOB
(dumbfounded)
You mean you're going to -- keep on with this thing?

JUDITH
Of course.

He stares at her. Then he turns on his heel, crosses to the stairs, and heads for the second floor. Judith is about to go after him when:

JIM'S VOICE
Mrs. Singer -- ?

NEW ANGLE

Cupcake is standing in the doorway.

JIM
Just a few more questions and we'll get out of your hair.

She nods and starts back for the kitchen. As she passes Cupcake he lowers his voice.

JIM
Uh -- listen, thanks for not saying anything about -- you know ...

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Forget it. I'm a Swiss bank.

And she goes into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

EXT. SINGER HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

The technicians are loading equipment into their cars as Jim and the older cop back down the drive. It's twilight; lamps have been lit in some of the neighboring houses.

ON JUDITH

She stands at the upstairs bedroom window, watching them go. And then she reacts.

HER POV - THROUGH WINDOW

A new car has just pulled up and Nelson Sharpe gets out. He flags down Jim Hogan and the two men have a brief conversation.

BACK TO JUDITH

JUDITH
What's he doing here?

NEW ANGLE

as Bob looks in from the hall.

BOB
I called him.

JUDITH
(turning)
You what?

BOB
The guy in charge. I figured you two should have a talk.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
(feeling betrayed)
Thanks. Thanks a lot.

BOB
Get it out in the open and then forget it. Believe me, it's better this way.

JUDITH
(bitter)
For who?

The doorbell SOUNDS from below. She sweeps past him.

NEW ANGLE

as she comes downstairs, Bob following. She yanks open the door. Angry, but trying not to show it. Nelson stands on the threshhold.

NELSON
Hi.

JUDITH
Come in, Lieutenant.
(as he enters, she jerks a thumb at Bob)
This is my husband, Bob. Maker of phone calls. Bob, this is Lieutenant Sharpe.

The two men shake hands, mumbling formalities, and move into the living room. Judith deploys herself on the sofa with an air of injured innocence.

BOB
Okay, Judith. Tell him.

JUDITH
Tell him what?

BOB
Will you stop playing games? Just tell the Lieutenant how you've been sticking your nose into the Fleckstein business.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

What would you like to know, Lieutenant?

BOB

Everything. Start talking and if he has any questions he'll ask.

(to Nelson)

Isn't that right, Lieutenant?

NELSON

Mr. Singer — would you mind leaving us alone?

BOB

Uh?

NELSON

I think it'll be easier if you're not here.

BOB

Now just a minute. This is my house —

JUDITH

Our house.

BOB

— our house, and Judith is entitled to have someone with her.

NELSON

Your wife is not a suspect, Mr. Singer. I just want to ask her a few questions.

JUDITH

Bob, could you please leave the room? If I need anything, I'll call you.

Bob looks back and forth between them. Then, with a great show of annoyance, he grabs his jacket from a chair.

BOB

I'll be across the street with the kids.

He goes out. Nelson and Judith size each other up.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
(rising)
We'd better do this in the kitchen.

NELSON
Why?

JUDITH
Because you're probably hungry.

INT. KITCHEN

as they come in and she takes a bowl of fruit from the refrigerator. Nelson selects an apple. Studies it.

NELSON
It's almost too red. Doesn't look real.

JUDITH
Haven't you heard? Nothing's real these days.

NELSON
Except for breaking and entering.

JUDITH
Boy, you really make adroit transitions, don't you?

NELSON
Youxx husband says you've been investigating the Fleckstein case.

JUDITH
My husband has a big mouth.

NELSON
Want to talk about it?

JUDITH
Not especially.

NELSON
Mrs. Singer, I've been butting my head against this thing for eighteen hours a day. So I'd appreciate it if you'd make my life a little bit easier for me.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
You're not making Marilyn Tuccio's life any easier for her.

NELSON
Why aren't I?

JUDITH
Is that probe you found the murder weapon?

NELSON
(beat)
How do you know about that?

JUDITH
(shrugs)
Rumors.

NELSON
No way. Now listen, Judith -- uh -- Mrs. Singer --

JUDITH
Judith is fine. And you haven't answered my question. Is it the murder weapon?

NELSON
Yes. And you haven't answered mine. How did you know? If there's a leak in this investigation --

JUDITH
Gotta protect my sources, Lieutenant. Privileged communication. But I will tell you one thing.

NELSON
What?

JUDITH
Last night there was someone in Marilyn's yard. Someone with a flashlight. I went over there and I heard a car drive away.

NELSON
You didn't see who it was?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

No. I forgot my infra-red sniperscope. But it's obvious that whoever it was planted the probe and then called the police.

NELSON

So you know about that too.

JUDITH

Lieutenant, somebody's trying to get this case closed fast. You should think about why.

NELSON

I'm too busy thinking how angry I'm getting.

JUDITH

I can tell. You're not eating your apple.

NELSON

No, I mean it.

JUDITH

Come on, Nelson. You sound like my husband. I haven't done anything wrong.

NELSON

You seem to have a pipeline to my office, you're withholding information —

JUDITH

Here we go. Bring out the rubber hose.

NELSON

Maybe I'm not making myself clear. I could hold you as a material witness.

JUDITH

On what charge? Felonious curiosity?

NELSON

Judith, try to understand. Even

(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (Cont'd)
if what you're doing isn't illegal,
it's dangerous as hell. Somebody
broke in here today. Suppose you
were home?

JUDITH
(sober)
The thought occurred to me.
(beat)
Look, I'm not trying to hold out
on you. That's the truth. I just
have some ideas and I want time to
play around with them.

NELSON
So we're back where we started.

JUDITH
Nelson, I am not stupid --

NELSON
Far from it.

JUDITH
-- so if I come up with anything --
thank you -- you'll be the first
one I'll call. But some of the
things I know are in confidence
and I just can't tell you.

NELSON
(sighs)
You're not easy.

JUDITH
You are?

A moment. Then:

JUDITH
Oh. I can tell you one thing.

NELSON
Throwing me a bone?

JUDITH
Pretty good bone, too. When I
was leaving Fleckstein's office,
he told his nurse he wanted to
see her early the next morning.
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

JUDITH (Cont'd)
And he asked her to bring in
her typewriter.

NELSON
Why didn't you mention this before?

JUDITH
Because I forgot. I'm new to the
business, remember? Anyway, don't
you think it's significant?

NELSON
It might be. Why would he want
her typewriter?

JUDITH
There's only one reason that makes
sense. Maybe he got a letter —
an anonymous letter — and he
wanted to see if she wrote it. Compare
the type, or something.
(beat)
Why are you looking at me?

NELSON
Because you're a bright lady..

JUDITH
You already said that.

NELSON
I know.

He continues to look at her — almost to the point where she becomes uncomfortable. Then:

NELSON
I think I'll talk to Lorna
Lewis.
(beat)
But you and I haven't finished
with each other.

JUDITH
(a small smile)
I guess not.

Another look and then he leaves the room. Judith picks up his apple and turns it in her fingers. It's untouched. She takes a bite.

WEDGE OF PIZZA

A tiny hand separates it from the rest of the pie. ANGLE WIDENS TO SHOW Joey lifting it mouthward. The Singers are gathered around a table in a neighborhood Italian restaurant. Eating in total silence. The chill factor between Bob and Judith is glacial.

NEW ANGLE

Joey is having a fine time, but even he finally becomes aware that something's amiss.

JOEY
(brightly)
Why is nobody talking?

JUDITH
Because Daddy's mad at Mommy.

JOEY
How come?

JUDITH
It's a long story.

KATE
You always say that.

JUDITH
No, honey, I don't always say that, because Daddy and I aren't always fighting.

KATE
Sure seems like it sometimes.

Troubled, Judith glances at Bob -- but he's staring at a fixed point on the tablecloth.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Judith is in bed. Bob comes out of the bathroom in his pajamas and gets under the covers. Careful not to touch her. He picks up a magazine.

JUDITH
Can we talk?

CONTINUED:

BOB

About what?

JUDITH

I don't know. Roosevelt trying to pack the Supreme Court. Will you please put down that magazine?

BOB

(he lowers it)

There's nothing to discuss. You've gotten yourself involved in something that's over your head and I can't deal with you.

JUDITH

What makes you think I'm over my head?

BOB

For Christ sake, Judith, what the hell do you know about criminal investigations?

JUDITH

If you'll listen for a second, I'll be glad to tell you.

BOB

Dammit, you're endangering yourself and maybe even the kids and I won't have it.

JUDITH

Will you let me get a word in? I'm not out of my league. I might even solve this thing. That police lieutenant -- Nelson Sharpe -- he doesn't think I'm being silly. He's listening to what I have to say.

BOB

He's humoring you.

(sighs)

Honey, I know how hard it is for you -- trapped in the house, staying home with the kids. And I've been thinking. If you want to go back to graduate school, I'll arrange for a housekeeper. Is that fair?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
I don't want to go back to graduate school. Not now, anyway.

BOB
Then what do you want?

JUDITH
I want to find the murderer.

Exasperated, he throws back the covers and climbs out of bed. He stalks around the room for a moment, getting himself under control. Then:

BOB
Judith ... would you consider having a talk with a psychiatrist?

JUDITH
I don't need a psychiatrist.

BOB
I didn't say need. It could be helpful. My brother goes to one.

JUDITH
Your brother's certifiably insane. Bob, I'm very happy doing what I'm doing -- putting this puzzle together. If I thought for a second something would happen to the kids I'd stop cold. Believe me. But nothing will.

BOB
If it's puzzles you want, go to law school. You have a good, analytical mind. I'll subsidize you.

JUDITH
I don't want to be a lawyer.

BOB
What the hell do you want to be -- a detective?

JUDITH
I don't know. I just want to be left alone to decide for myself.

CONTINUED:

BOB

This is ridiculous. Judith, I want this nonsense to stop! You're acting crazy.

JUDITH

You seem to be saying that a lot lately.

BOB

Well, you've certainly given me enough provocation.

(starts for door)

I'm going downstairs. Let me know when you've come to your senses.

JUDITH

Bob —

But he leaves the room. She lies back against her pillow. Angry, sad, and confused.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAUM BROTHERS MORTURARY - DAY

A white marble frontage sandwiched in between a Cadillac dealership and a restaurant called Quelle Crepe. It's lot is crowded with cars, and a hearse stands waiting in front. ESTABLISH, then pan to Judith's station wagon parked across the street.

INT. STATION WAGON

Nancy is with her. Craning to get a better view.

NANCY

My God, it's like Saturday at Bloomingdale's. Look at that — a black Halston.

(to Judith)

You're not watching the festivities.

JUDITH

I'm thinking about the photographs.

CONTINUED:

BOB

About what?

JUDITH

I don't know. Roosevelt trying to pack the Supreme Court. Will you please put down that magazine?

BOB

(he lowers it)

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BOB

He's humoring you.

(sighs)

Honey, I know how hard it is for you -- trapped in the house, staying home with the kids. And I've been thinking. If you want to go back to graduate school, I'll arrange for a housekeeper. Is that fair?

CONTINUED:

NANCY

So are most of the mourners, I suspect.

JUDITH

Where would he keep them? Not in his office — too dangerous with Lorna around. Besides, the cops would've found them. A safety deposit box?

NANCY

Doubtful. Brucie would've wanted them within drooling distance.

(gestures toward mortuary)

Speak of the devil.

Judith looks.

THEIR POV - LORNA LEWIS

Grim-faced. Hurrying up to the front door.

BACK TO SCENE

NANCY

Wonder if he had any pictures of her? Naked with a bottle of Lavoris.

JUDITH

Why did they pose for him? That's what I can't understand.

NANCY

Never underestimate the stupidity of animals in heat.

JUDITH

That's pretty harsh.

NANCY

Is it?

(indicates o.s.)

Case in point.

THEIR POV - MARY ALICE MAHONEY

Swathed in black. Furtively glancing around. Satisfied that she's unrecognized, she slips into the building.

BACK TO SCENE

NANCY
Good old Malice. Can't stay away.

JUDITH
The funny thing is, I don't even think he liked women.

NANCY
Don Juans never do. Notches on the gun, Judith. Very common. Not sex. Power.

JUDITH
(suddenly)
Trophies!

NANCY
What?

JUDITH
That's what those pictures are. They're trophies. Like — I don't know — moose heads or loving cups. And you keep those things at home. Nancy, I've got to get into his house!

NANCY
Lots of luck.

JUDITH
There has to be a way. If —
(breaks off. Astonished. Stares through the window)
I don't believe it!

Nancy follows her gaze.

THEIR POV - MARILYN TUCCIO

Entering the mortuary.

BACK TO SCENE

NANCY

Well, well. The Flying Nun herself.

JUDITH

Why would she come?

NANCY

Probably to make sure he's dead. Hey — isn't that our local P.T.A. president?

THEIR POV - WOMAN

Attractive. Going in with some of the other mourners.

BACK TO SCENE

JUDITH

Do you think —

NANCY

Of course.

(laughs)

And she's the one against too much sex on TV. Judith, this is marvelous! Bruce would love it. With all these women around, they may have trouble closing the coffin.

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

Everyone is inside now except for a portly man in a suit, obviously one of the Brothers Baum, who is scanning the street. He's rewarded by a black limousine that peels off from the traffic and double-parks. A stunning woman alights, garbed in black. Baum offers her his arm and guides her toward the building.

INT. STATION WAGON

NANCY

If I'm not mistaken, that's the grieving widow.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Nancy, I know her!

NANCY
You do?

JUDITH
Not by name, but we take our dogs to the same obedience class.

NANCY
Hey, teriffic. That's really exciting, Judith.

JUDITH
(thinking)
We've got a class scheduled for tonight ...

NANCY
So?

JUDITH
(pleased with herself)
So now I know how to get into Fleckstein's house.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLECKSTEIN HOUSE - DAY

A pleasant Colonial with ample grounds. Cars parked everywhere. Judith noses the station wagon into an empty spot and goes up to the front door. A black funeral wreath hangs over the brass knocker. Before she has a chance to ring, the door opens and a YOUNG COUPLE emerges. The girl is sniffling into a handkerchief.

GIRL
It's so sad ... Poor Norma ... It's so, so sad ...

MAN
Helluva dentist. Helluva guy.

They go off.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

as Judith enters and comes face-to-face with a formidable black maid.

JUDITH
I'm -- uh -- Judith Singer --

MAID
Food's in the dining room. Mrs. Fleckstein's over there.

She moves away to empty an ashtray. The place is mobbed with post-burial friends and relatives. They mill about, some with plates heaped with fruit and pastry. Judith glances toward:

HER POV - NORMA FLECKSTEIN

Presiding over an impromptu reception line. The mourners file by, extending their condolences, and she accepts them with an almost regal air.

BACK TO JUDITH

Deciding to circulate. She wanders around the living room; it's a gazebo-like affair, with potted plants hanging over airy cane furniture. Two fat men are inspecting a painting as she goes by.

1ST FAT MAN
What do you think that set him back?

2ND FAT MAN
About five fillings. Anything more and he was robbed.

NEW ANGLE

as she moves into the dining room. People are picking the buffet table bare. Snippets of conversations hang in the air -- about the price of land in the Hamptons, the weather in St. Croix, and did this marvelous pastry come from that new little place in Great Neck? Judith makes her way down the hall to escape the crowd and turns into an open doorway. She finds herself in:

FLECKSTEIN'S STUDY

A comfortable room in tones of beige. Evidently the dead man's sanctum sanctorum. There's a bookcase, a desk, and various trophies of the golf and tennis variety. Judith is itching to look around, but unfortunately a middle-aged COUPLE is present. They are at the window, gazing out at the garden. Her entrance has gone unnoticed.

WOMAN
... I just can't believe it.

MAN
Can't believe what?

WOMAN
A few days ago this was Bruce and Norma's house -- now it's just Norma's house. That's what I can't believe.

MAN
Why can't you believe it? He's dead. Who do you think's going to get the house when I die?

WOMAN
Sometimes I wonder.

MAN
Do you? Well, maybe you should.

WOMAN
Go to hell.

MAN
Why not? It would be an improvement.

They suddenly notice Judith. Embarrassed, they rearrange their angry faces and drift out.

NEW ANGLE - JUDITH

Alone now, she makes a quick mental inventory of the room. There are no cabinets and apparently no places of concealment. She crosses to the desk and begins opening drawers. Rummaging around inside. The search is unproductive -- nothing but stationary, paper clips, and bills. She is up to her elbow in one of the drawers, feeling for a secret compartment, when --

CONTINUED:

VOICE
(o.s.)
May I help you?

Startled, she looks up.

NEW ANGLE

Norma Fleckstein stands in the doorway.

JUDITH
Oh. No — uh — I was just — looking for a match.

Norma comes into the room, picks up a desk lighter, and flicks it into flame.

JUDITH
Uh — thank you.

Flustered, she digs around in her purse.

JUDITH
Now I — seem to be out of cigarettes.

Norma indicates a lacquered box. Judith fumbles off the lid, takes out a Kent, and puts it in her mouth.

NORMA
Wrong way.

JUDITH
Mm?

NORMA
You'll light the filter.

JUDITH
Oh. Right. Thanks.

She reverses the cigarette and dips into the flame. Inhales, trying desperately not to cough. Norma sets down the lighter.

NORMA
(conversationally)
Were you a friend of Bruce's?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
A patient.

NORMA
So many of his patients are here today. It's very gratifying.

JUDITH
As a matter of fact, Mr. Fleckstein, you and I have met before.

NORMA
We have?

JUDITH
Not actually met, but we go to the same class. Dog-O-Bedience?

NORMA
Oh, yes. I think I remember. You have that little brown Yorkie.

JUDITH
Uh, no. It's a mongrel. Max. Listen — one of the reasons I came — the class is tonight, and obviously you won't be going, so I wanted you to know I'd be happy to take your dog with me.

[illegible]

NORMA
That's terribly kind of you, Mrs. — ?

JUDITH
Singer. Judith Singer.

NORMA
— but I really couldn't put you to all that trouble.

JUDITH
No trouble at all. And tonight's a very important class. Sit and Stay.

NORMA
Well ...

JUDITH
They shouldn't miss a session. It confuses them. And I'd feel as _if_ I was — you know — helping out.

CONTINUED:

NORMA
When would you pick him up?

JUDITH
I can take him with me now. And bring him back later tonight.

NORMA
I suppose life has to go on, doesn't it? All right. Prince is in the back yard. I could use some fresh air. Could you?

Judith nods and they both leave the room. Then she runs back quickly and stubs out the cigarette.

DOG

Snarling. A German Shepherd, bearing its fangs. ANGLE WIDENS TO SHOW Norma and Judith by a fenced-in dog run.

NORMA
(soothing)
Now, now, Prince. She's a friend.
(to Judith)
Be very firm with him. And don't worry — his bark is much worse than his bite.

Judith is not particularly comforted by this. She eyes the dog uneasily as Norma lets it out and attaches a leash to its collar.

NORMA
You'd better take the leash. Let him get used to you.

JUDITH
Nice Prince. Good boy.

The dog snarls again. Judith jumps back.

NORMA
Maybe this isn't such a good idea ...

JUDITH
No. We'll get along just — fine. He probably smells Max on me.
(gives the dog
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

JUDITH (Cont'd)
a tentative pat)
I guess he misses your husband.

NORMA
Yes ...

JUDITH
I know my husband is crazy about Maxie. Always taking his picture. Bob's hobby is photography.
(beat)
Somebody told me your husband took pictures too.

She studies Norma for a reaction, but it's disappointingly casual.

NORMA
Not really. I got him one of those instant cameras, but he never seemed to use it.

JUDITH
He didn't take pictures of you?

NORMA
Oh, one or two. At parties. He wasn't much of a photographer.

During this, they move toward the side of the house. Prince sniffs at Judith's heels. Making her nervous.

JUDITH
Well -- I'm sure the police will come up with something soon. I understand the officer in charge is very clever.

NORMA
He'll have to be. Apparently there are a great many suspects.

JUDITH
Why do you say that?

NORMA
(indicating Prince)
Don't bother feeding him. Gertrude can give him his dinner when you bring him home.
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NORMA (Cont'd)
(holds out her hand)
Again, Mrs. Singer, I appreciate this.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

SHOOTING THROUGH a window. Someone is watching them. They exchange a few more words -- we don't hear what they're saying -- then Judith goes off, tugging at Prince's leash. Norma starts back for the house.

REVERSE ANGLE - LORNA LEWIS

as she turns away from the window. The other guests swirl around her, talking and eating, but she doesn't notice. Her expression is cold and angry.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHOREHAVEN PARK - NIGHT

An oasis of green on the outskirts of the community. There's a duck pond, a bird-spattered statue or two, and a Revolutionary War cannon. At the moment the park's tranquility has been shattered by a roiling mass of recalcitrant dogs. Yelping. Defacating. Setting up a horrible din. The Dog-O-Bedience class is drawing to a chaotic close under the glow of old-fashioned street lights. An exhausted group of suburbanites stands in a ragged line, dogs more or less at heel, facing a feisty OLD WOMAN who wears a whistle around her neck. Judith is among them, struggling to keep Max and Prince in check. They have taken an instant dislike to each other.

OLD WOMAN
... next week we'll work on heeling again, but it's essential that you practice home reinforcement. Let's try Sit and Stay one more time.
(blows the whistle)
Now!

A chorus of voices gives the command "Sit!" Some of the dogs obey. Most don't. Judith is caught in a hopeless tangle as Max and Prince wrap their leashes around her

CONTINUED:

ankles.

OLD WOMAN
Again. Sit! And now Stay! Walk
away from them. That's it. Good!

Judith unbraids the two leashes, hurling commands at Max and Prince. Some of her classmates have given up and are tugging their dogs toward the parking area.

OLD WOMAN
All right, they're getting tired
so let's call it a night. See
you all next week.

Now everyone disperses. A few stay behind to discuss canine problems with the old trainer, but most pile into cars and begin a bumper-to-bumper exodus.

ON JUDITH

The dogs are pulling in opposite directions. She side-steps several departing cars, wending her way toward her station wagon.

VOICE
Mrs. Singer —

NEW ANGLE

as she turns. Lorna Lewis is standing a few feet away.

JUDITH
(surprised)
Oh. Hello.

LORNA
I want to talk to you.

Her manner is belligerent. She's obviously been drinking.

JUDITH
Uh — sure. Shall we get a cup
of coffee?

LORNA
What did you tell that cop?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

Beg pardon?

LORNA

I had nothing to do with this!
I know what people are saying,
but I don't give a damn! I wouldn't
have hurt him for the world.

JUDITH

I'm sure nobody thinks --

LORNA

Just stay out of my life!

JUDITH

Lorna, I'm not in your life. Look,
let me buy you a cup of coffee --

LORNA

I don't want any coffee. I want
you to mind your own business.

She turns and starts away. Judith goes after her.

JUDITH

Lorna -- I'm sorry if I --

Eyes blazing, Lorna swings around and slaps her across the face. Judith is astonished. More shocked than hurt. Before she can speak, the other woman runs off.

NEW ANGLE

A few people have seen the incident, but no one comes forward. Max and Prince are hunkered down. Somewhat intimidated by the outburst. She stoops to pet each of them in turn and gathers up their fallen leashes.

JUDITH

Come on, gang. Let's go home.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as she leads them to the station wagon. The parking area is empty now and the crickets have resumed their chatter. Judith unfastens the clasp on her shoulder purse to get her keys -- and then she stares at the car.

HER POV

A window wing has been forced and the door on the passenger side stands open. Someone has searched the car — particularly the glove compartment. Gasoline credit slips are scattered on the floor.

ON JUDITH

Shaken. Trying to assimilate this new development. She ruefully rubs her tingling cheek.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Dark woods on either side. The station wagon cruises along at a moderate clip.

INT. STATION WAGON

The two dogs are in the back, maintaining an uneasy truce. Judith eyes them in the rear-view mirror.

JUDITH
Just a little longer, guys.
Then you'll never have to see
each other again.

Her gaze returns to the road — just as the car begins to bounce and jump, the wheel vibrating in her hands. She reduces her speed but it has no effect. Puzzled, she pulls over to the shoulder and gets out.

EXT. NIGHT - ROAD

as she walks around the station wagon.

HER POV - LEFT REAR TIRE

Almost flat.

BACK TO JUDITH

JUDITH
Damn!

CONTINUED:

She stands there helplessly. Looking down the deserted road. Nothing. Not even the sound of an approaching car. Disgusted, she opens the door of the station wagon and removes her keys.

JUDITH
(to dogs)
I won't be long. Try not to
kill each other.

NEW ANGLE

as she starts off down the road. CAMERA PANS SLOWLY in the opposite direction. A car inches into sight. Headlights unlit.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

SHOOTING THROUGH windshield from the unseen driver's POV. We see Judith(s diminishing figure in the distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Closed, a night light burning in the office. Judith comes over the brow of a hill, tired and irritable, and trudges toward the station.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as she approaches, crossing past the islands of pumps toward the solitary light. She raps on the glass of the office.

JUDITH
Anybody home?

No response. Frustrated, she scans the area.

HER POV - PHONE BOOTH

In back, near the restrooms.

ON JUDITH

She goes toward it, opening her purse.

INT. BOOTH

as she enters and closes the folding door. An overhead light snaps on. She sets her purse on the ledge and locates her auto club card. Then she inserts a dime and dials information.

JUDITH
Operator? Number for the Auto
Club, please. Emergency road
service ... Thanks.

She hangs up, fishes her dime from the slot, and reinserts it. But before she can dial, a sudden flood of light sweeps over her. She almost drops the phone. The car we saw before has drifted to within a few yards of the booth, its brights glaring into her eyes.

NEW ANGLE

Without any warning, the motor kicks to life — and the car suddenly rams the booth.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as Judith screams. The car backs up and plows forward again, this time splintering the glass. She's knocked off balance against the side of the booth. Once again the car reverses. Backs up a few feet. Petrified, she tries to force open the door. It's stuck. She claws at it. Finally pulls it open and stumbles out.

EXT. STATION

She runs, half-tripping, desperately looking for cover. The car doesn't follow. Instead, it swings abreast of the booth. Judith darts around the side of the building. A tow-truck is parked nearby and she hurls herself to the ground, crawling under it.

CLOSE - JUDITH

Her face against the asphalt. Almost hyperventilating. She hears the car door opening — and then the door of the phone booth. A long beat. She huddles in her hiding place, not knowing what to think. And then, surprisingly,

CONTINUED:

the car door slams. With a roar of the motor, it guns off. Judith doesn't move. Then, after a few moments, she realizes that it probably isn't coming back.

NEW ANGLE

as she crawls out from under the truck. Gets to her feet. She's trembling and unsteady -- an adrenalin hangover -- but she manages to creep around the side of the building.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The car is gone, the road empty. Judith moves cautiously toward the phone booth, prepared to run at any moment. And then she sees her purse. It's been dumped, its contents scattered on the ground. She crouches down and checks her wallet, but nothing seems to be missing. Now bewilderment begins to replace her fear. She finds the card Nelson gave her and goes into the booth. The receiver is dangling and there is the dim buzz of a dial tone. Consulting the card, she dials.

RINGING PHONE

ANGLE WIDENS TO SHOW a section of an apartment. Nelson, in sportshirt and jeans -- and clutching a hot TV dinner with a potholder -- reaches INTO SHOT and answers the phone. INTERCUT CONVERSATION.

NELSON
Hello?

JUDITH
Nelson?!

NELSON
Who's this?

JUDITH
(annoyed)
What do you mean, 'who's this?'
I thought we were pals.

NELSON
I'm sorry, but --

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Damn you, it's the Apple Lady!

NELSON
(pleased)
Judith!

JUDITH
How are you at fixing tires?

NELSON
What?

JUDITH
Nelson — I think I need help.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHOREHAVEN POLICE STATION

A converted clapboard house. Judith's station wagon is parked in front, the two dogs barking in the back seat.

INT. POLICE STATION

The lights are lit but the cluttered office is empty except for Nelson, who's talking on the phone, and Judith, who has found a mirror and is industriously scrubbing grease stains from her face. Nelson hangs up and brings her a cup of coffee.

NELSON
As expected. A Mr. Ludwig — he runs a health food store — reported his car missing. I'm sure we'll turn it up tomorrow with a dented fender. Too bad you didn't get the license number.

JUDITH
I didn't even see the make. But it was dark green. Maybe.

NELSON
So was Mr. Ludwig's. By the way — you didn't run over a nail. The air was deliberately let out of your tire.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
All so somebody could get a look
in my purse. It boggles the mind.

NELSON
What the hell are they after?

JUDITH
If they'll tell me I'll give it
to them. I can do without another
night like this.

He takes her handkerchief and wipes off a final spot of grease.

JUDITH
Thanks.

They exchange tired smiles. Then he starts to pace.

NELSON
All right — let's see what we've
got. Assailant's identity — unknown. Object of search — unknown.

JUDITH
And reason for slap in face from
Lorna Lewis — also unknown.

NELSON
Not really.

JUDITH
Oh? Holding out on me?

NELSON
That's pretty funny, coming from
you.

JUDITH
Hey, Nelson, I'm the one who got
slapped. The least you can do —

NELSON
The least I can do is tell you
everything while you keep secrets.
Okay, maybe you're entitled. Lorna's
fit to be tied because you told me
about the typewriter. When I questioned her she went to pieces.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Was I right? I mean, did Fleckstein want to compare the type?

NELSON
It's complicated.

JUDITH
Nelson, we've established that I have a brain.

NELSON
I assume you know Lorna wanted the good doctor to get a divorce.

JUDITH
(vaguely)
I may have heard something about it.

NELSON
Now who's holding out?

JUDITH
All right, Marilyn Tuccio told me. She said it was common knowledge.

NELSON
Well, Lorna finally got tired of waiting. Last week she decided to force the issue, so she dug out her trusty Smith-Corona --

JUDITH
A letter to his wife!

NELSON
Anonymous. A full report on his extra-cirricular activities.

JUDITH
Naming names?

NELSON
The complete harem. Anyway, that's why you're not Lorna's favorite person. If you hadn't remembered about the typewriter, none of this would have come out.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

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CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Did you talk to Mrs. Fleckstein?

NELSON
(nods)
A few hours ago. She admitted getting the letter. Matter of fact, she opened it at the dinner table while Bruce was sitting there.

JUDITH
Oh, Lord.

NELSON
According to her, he almost had a seizure. Then he got angry. Then he got contrite. He confessed everything and swore he'd never do it again.

JUDITH
I'm surprised she didn't kill him right there.

NELSON
She did something worse. She forgave him.

JUDITH
She what?!

NELSON
That's what the lady says.

JUDITH
Do you believe her?

NELSON
Who knows? Apparently they talked all night and she agreed to stay with him on two conditions. One, that he'd go into analysis. And two, that they'd move to San Francisco and start a new life together.

JUDITH
Of course, you only have her word for all this. But if it's true, it certainly gives her a motive.

CONTINUED:

NELSON

Nobody's been scratched. Including Lorna. Especially since her lover was just about to find out she put a major crimp in his lifestyle. And let's not forget your neighbor –– the one with the murder weapon in her back yard.

JUDITH

Curioser and curioser ...

She ponders for a long moment.

NELSON

Something?

JUDITH

No. It's all just swimming around.

(looks at her watch)

Oh, brother, it's getting late. I have to go home.

NELSON

Want me to follow you?

JUDITH

Why? Do you think I need a bodyguard?

NELSON

You might.

JUDITH

Don't say that –– I'm scared enough as it is. Anyway, I –– uh –– have to make a stop first.

NELSON

(suspicious)

Oh?

JUDITH

Besides, he's not after me.

(thoughtful)

He's after something I have ... Whatever the hell that might be.

CUT TO:

WINDOW - NIGHT

On the second floor of the Fleckstein house. A square of yellow light.

ON JUDITH

Parked across the street. Watching. We get the impression she's been there for quite a while. The dogs, friends now, are nuzzling each other.

JUDITH'S POV - WINDOW

as the light goes out.

BACK TO SCENE

She waits a few beats, stretching her cramped muscles, then turns on the ignition.

NEW ANGLE

as she makes a U-turn into the Fleckstein driveway and comes to a stop by the front door. Prince begins to bark. She shushes him, hooks his leash to his collar, and tugs him out of the car.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as she rings the bell, praying Norma doesn't answer. A porch light snaps on and the maid opens the door.

JUDITH
Hi. I'm returning Prince. Is Mrs. Fleckstein up?

MAID
Just went to bed. I'll take him.

She reaches for the leash.

JUDITH
Uh -- listen, do you mind if I use your phone? I had some car trouble and my husband's probably worried.

The maid regards her narrowly for a beat. Finally steps

CONTINUED:

aside.

JUDITH

Thanks. Phone's in the study, isn't it? I'll only be a minute.

Without waiting for a reply, she heads for the hall. The maid closes the door and pulls Prince toward the kitchen.

MAID

C'mon, mutt. Gotta get you your dinner.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

as Judith enters and turns on the light. She takes a deep breath and quickly crosses to the desk. She checks out the drawers she missed that afternoon, lifts the blotter, and then goes to a coffee table and shuffles through a stack of magazines. Finally, frustrated, she picks up the phone and dials.

TELEPHONE

RINGING. ANGLE WIDENS TO SHOW Nancy in her bedroom. Paging through an art catalogue. She reaches out a long arm and scoops up the receiver. INTERCUT.

NANCY

Hello?

JUDITH

Nancy? Judith. Is your husband there?

NANCY

That's an interesting way to open a conversation.

JUDITH

I just don't want him to hear. Where is he?

NANCY

Where he always is at this hour — in the can, reading the Wall Street Journal. What don't you want him to hear?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

You'll never guess where I am.

NANCY

In bed with Gore Vidal?

JUDITH

I'm at Fleckstein's house. In his study.

NANCY

And just how did you manage that?

JUDITH

Nancy, those photographs are here somewhere. I can feel it. But I can't find the damn things ...

(hears footsteps.
Raises her voice)

— that's right, honey, a flat tire. I should be home in ten minutes —

The sound of the footsteps receeds.

NANCY

What the hell — ?

JUDITH

The maid. It's okay now. Anyway, I've searched his desk and I'm running out of time. Any ideas?

NANCY

What kind of furniture?

JUDITH

Just chairs and a sofa.

NANCY

Cabinets?

JUDITH

Uh-uh.

NANCY

Any paintings?

JUDITH

One. A seascape. You'd hate it.

CONTINUED:

NANCY
Move it away from the wall. Maybe there's a safe.

JUDITH
They only do that in old movies.

Carrying the phone on its extension cord, she crosses to the painting and feels behind it.

JUDITH
Nope. No safe.

NANCY
A sliding panel under the rug?

JUDITH
Now that's really dumb.

NANCY
What do you want, I'm not there.
(beat)
Uh-oh. I just heard a flush. Talk faster.

Still carrying the phone, Judith prowls the room. She's in a frenzy of frustration.

JUDITH
Where would he *put* them? He wouldn't want the maid to find them. Or Norma —

NANCY
Face it, they're probably somewhere else.

By now Judith stands at the bookcase. *Scanning* titles. She grows thoughtful as an idea strikes her.

JUDITH
Nancy — do you *think* he had a sense of humor?

NANCY
Sure. He went to bed with Mary Alice, didn't he?

JUDITH
I'm *looking* at his books. And there's one —

CONTINUED:

NANCY
You didn't tell me he had a bookcase.

JUDITH
— there's one ... "The Nude in Photography." Is it possible — ?

NANCY
(a command)
Open it, for Christ sake!

Judith slips the book from the shelf and moves back to the desk. She sets it down under a lamp. Anchoring the phone receiver with her shoulder, and holding her breath, she lifts the cover.

ON NANCY

Listening. Straining to hear. Finally:

JUDITH'S VOICE
Oh, my God!

Nancy smiles. To phone:

NANCY
My house. Tomorrow morning.

She delicately replaces the receiver.

CUT TO:

INT. NANCY'S BASEMENT STUDIO - DAY

Nancy locks the door and crosses to her work table where a somber Judith is waiting with a manila envelope. Nancy plants herself on a stool.

NANCY
I gather you've looked?
(Judith nods)
Then gimmee.

Judith hands over the envelope and Nancy opens it eagerly. Shakes out the Polaroids on the table. There are an even dozen, and she devours them one by one.

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Oh, my. My, my, my ...

Judith doesn't comment. She walks away from the table and stares at one of Nancy's paintings.

NANCY

Jesus, that's the biggest vibrator I've ever seen ... Hey! Isn't this Ethel Sawyer? The one with the peek-a-boo brasiere?

JUDITH

Yes.

NANCY

She's my daughter's group leader at school ... And here's Ginger Wick. Don't you just love the face mask? I'll say one thing for Bruce — he certainly had a passion for props ... Aha! He did take pictures of Lorna. Nice body.

(beat)

Who's this? With the riding crop?

JUDITH

Her name is Linda Berman.

NANCY

Berman ... Berman. Oh, yes. The one who went to Argentina to have dimples put in her ass.

(looks at another picture)

That's an interesting use for cantaloupes.

(still another)

Here's Mary Alice. Are those square knots?

(one more)

And your friend Marilyn. Bringing up the rear, so to speak. Not very erotic — too self-conscious. Will you look at that Caesarean?

Judith hasn't moved. Nancy glances over at her.

NANCY

All right — what's wrong?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
I guess I don't like the way you're licking your chops.

NANCY
Sue me. I'm a sucker for pornography.

JUDITH
But they're not pornography. They're — sad. I mean, I know most of these women. They have kids and they go to the supermarket just like I do. I feel as if I'm invading their privacy.

NANCY
If they didn't want their privacy invaded, they should have kept their clothes on.

JUDITH
Okay, so they were foolish. But they never expected someone like me to be looking at those things.

NANCY
Better you than the police.

JUDITH
(troubled)
That's my problem.

NANCY
What problem?

JUDITH
Nancy, these women are suspects in a murder case. The pictures are material evidence. If I destroy them, or keep them to myself, I'm guilty of a crime.

NANCY
And if you hand them over to our boys in blue, there's bound to be a leak.

JUDITH
(miserable)
I know. Sooner or later the hus-
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

JUDITH (Cont'd)
bands might find out. And I don't feel right about keeping this from Nelson.

NANCY
Nelson?

JUDITH
(flustered)
Uh — the lieutenant who's working on the case.

NANCY
(a raised eyebrow)
Nelson, is it? Working on the case — or working on you?

JUDITH
Jesus, you have a dirty mind.

NANCY
Very. What's he look like?

JUDITH
Dammit, Nancy —

NANCY
Anyway, you have my full approval. It's about time.

JUDITH
Can we *please* get back to my problem? What the hell am I going to do?

NANCY
Judith, this affair of yours is apparently clouding your *mind* —

JUDITH
I'm *not* having an affair!

NANCY
— because the answer's really very simple.

JUDITH
It is?

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Of course. You'd like to protect those fallen ladies and feed their pictures to your garbage disposal, right?

JUDITH

Right.

NANCY

Then all you have to do is find the murderer.

It makes perfect sense. Judith slumps down on a stool.

JUDITH

(flat)

Yeah. That's all I have to do.

CUT TO:

INT. SINGER BATHROOM - DAY

It's filled with steam. Judith, dripping wet and wearing a shower cap, steps out of the stall just as the doorbell begins to RING.

JUDITH

(yelling)

Just a minute!

She pulls off the cap, shaking her hair loose, and slips into a robe.

INT. LIVING ROOM

as she hurries downstairs in a pair of floppy mules. Yanks open the front door.

NEW ANGLE

Nelson is standing there. Amused.

JUDITH

Oh. Uh — hi.

NELSON

Last time you put the chain on. You're getting careless.

CONTINUED:

She steps away from the door and he enters. As he does, her eyes flick toward:

HER POV - COFFEE TABLE

The manila envelope containing the photographs lies there in plain sight.

BACK TO SCENE

JUDITH
(edgy)
Is this an official visit?

NELSON
What else would it be?
(studies her)
Why are you so nervous?

JUDITH
I hate that.

NELSON
What?

JUDITH
Telling people they're nervous.
It — makes them nervous. Listen,
come on out in the kitchen. I'll
get us some coffee.

NELSON
No, thanks. For once in my life
I ate before I came over here ...
Can I sit down?

JUDITH
Uh — sure.

He sits on the sofa behind the coffee table. The envelope is inches away. She perches uneasily on the arm of a chair. Belting and rebelting her robe.

NELSON
Judith, what's wrong with you?

JUDITH
Nothing. Well, maybe a reaction
to last night. Anyway, you came
to interrogate — so interrogate.

CONTINUED:

NELSON
Actually, I just wanted to see
how you are.

JUDITH
Well, that's ... very nice.

NELSON
So how are you?

JUDITH
(grins)
Nervous.

NELSON
I noticed.

A long beat.

JUDITH
How's the case?

NELSON
Lousy.

JUDITH
Too bad.
(beat)
You're sure you don't want some
coffee?

He looks at her. The robe is partly open.

NELSON
What I really want --
(he breaks off)
No, thanks. No coffee.

She tugs the robe back in place. Another silence. Then he gets up and takes a step toward her.

JUDITH
(quickly)
Nelson, I've been doing some
thinking. I get my best ideas
in the shower, you know? And I
have a theory.
(beat)
Are you interested in my theory?

CONTINUED:

A pause. He sighs and sits back down again.

NELSON
Tell me your theory, Judith.

JUDITH
Well — I think Fleckstein was being blackmailed. That would explain those monthly withdrawals from his bank account —

NELSON
(rising)
Now wait just a minute. Who told you about that?

JUDITH
The important thing —

NELSON
The important thing is who told you!

JUDITH
No it isn't. The important thing is that on the day he was *killed* he *didn't* withdraw any money.

NELSON
I'm not running an investigation, I'm running a sieve!

JUDITH
Just listen to me. Suppose Fleckstein *was* being blackmailed? Suppose somebody threatened to *tell* Norma about all his women? Who had the money in the family, by the way?

NELSON
She did. Rich father.

JUDITH
Okay. He probably didn't want his marriage to break up for that reason alone. And he had a good thing going on the side. So he paid. But then —

NELSON
(caught up)
Lorna's letter!

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Exactly. Everything he was trying to hide came out.

NELSON
And his wife forgave him.

JUDITH
Uh-huh. So all of a sudden, Fleckstein wasn't vulnerable any more. Kind of puts the balckmailer in an awkward position, doesn't it?

NELSON
That's why he didn't withdraw any money that last day. He was stopping all payments. The blackmailer came to collect --

JUDITH
Bruce laughed in his face --

NELSON
Probably threatened to expose him, picked up the phone --

JUDITH
And got himself killed.

NELSON
Judith, you're terrific.

JUDITH
(pleased)
I am?

NELSON
It all fits. There's just one small missing part.

JUDITH
What's that?

NELSON
Who did it?

JUDITH
(beat)
Oh. That. Well, I can't do all your work for you, can I?

CONTINUED:

They both laugh. At that precise moment, the kitchen phone RINGS.

JUDITH
Will you get it for me? I don't want to talk to anyone.

Nelson goes into the kitchen. As soon as he's out of sight, she grabs the manila envelope and stuffs it under a sofa cushion.

NELSON
(calling from the kitchen)
It's your husband.

JUDITH
Oh.
(beat)
I'll take it upstairs. Will you hang up after I get on?

She quickly goes up the steps.

INT. BEDROOM

as she crosses to the phone and picks up the receiver.

JUDITH
Hello?

INT. BOB'S OFFICE - DAY

He sits at his desk with a slice of Manhattan visible outside his window. INTERCUT CONVERSATION.

BOB
Judith? Who answered the phone just now?

JUDITH
Lieutenant Sharpe.

BOB
What's he doing there?

JUDITH
He stopped by to talk about the case.

CONTINUED:

BOB
I thought we agreed you have better things to do.

JUDITH
Bob, we haven't agreed on anything in days. Besides, there's actually been some progress. I figured out that Fleckstein ––

BOB
Jesus, are we going to start this all over again?

JUDITH
Okay. Forget it. Is there something you wanted?

BOB
Do I have to want something? I called to say hello.

JUDITH
Oh. Well hello.

BOB
I mean, I'm sorry if I interrupted your game of cops and robbers ––

JUDITH
(annoyed)
Bob, really, I don't need this. If you haven't got anything nice to say ––

BOB
What do you expect? I've had a rotten morning, and then when I pick up the phone to talk to my wife ––

JUDITH
Listen, can we do this later? Maybe we'll both be in a better mood.

BOB
There's nothing wrong with my mood. At least there wasn't.

An inter-com buzz sounds at his elbow.

CONTINUED:

BOB

Hell. That's my L.A. call.

JUDITH

Don't keep L.A. waiting.

BOB

I'll see you at dinner. All right?

JUDITH

Fine.

She hangs up, disturbed. And then senses that she's not alone. She turns.

NEW ANGLE

Nelson is standing in the doorway.

JUDITH

What are you doing up here?

NELSON

Why? Does it make you nervous having me in your bedroom?

JUDITH

We've established it's been a nervous day. Were you listening to my call?

NELSON

No.

JUDITH

Sure as hell seemed like it. Why don't you have my phone tapped?

He doesn't answer. Instead, he crosses over to her.

JUDITH

Nelson ...? What are you doing?

He just looks at her.

JUDITH

I -- uh -- think we should go downstairs.

CONTINUED:

He puts his arms around her. A moment later they're kissing. With considerable intensity. He's stroking her, pressing his body into hers, and she finds herself responding with a greedy lack of restraint. His hand drops to the belt of her robe and she pushes away.

JUDITH
Nelson — no.

NELSON
Why not?

JUDITH
Because I can't handle it.

NELSON
Yes you can.

He moves in again. This time their embrace is even more passionate. They are standing by the edge of the bed and Nelson slips her robe from one of her shoulders. She pulls it back. Breaks away.

JUDITH
(out of breath)
Please.

He steps back.

NELSON
Do you want me to apologize?

JUDITH
I don't know.

NELSON
Judith —

JUDITH
Don't say anything. We're in enough trouble as it is.

NELSON
I want to be in trouble.

JUDITH
Let's go downstairs and talk about the case.

NELSON
No.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

Come on, Nelson. If we stay here you know what'll happen.

NELSON

Uh-huh.

JUDITH

Now, dammit, I'm certainly not going to sleep with you in my own bed. I mean, I can *smell* Bob's shaving lotion on the pillow.

NELSON

Then come to my place.

JUDITH

Sure. Your wife'll really love that.

NELSON

I'm divorced.

JUDITH

You are?

NELSON

Yes. Does it make a difference?

JUDITH

I'm *not* divorced. And *that* makes a difference.

Nelson points to the bed.

NELSON

Sit.

JUDITH
(protesting)

Nelson —

NELSON

I didn't say lie, I said sit.

He gives her a push and she plops down on the bed.

NELSON

You're a very flakey person,
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (Cont'd)
but I think I'm falling in love with you. I want to tear off that robe and the hell with your husband's shaving lotion. But maybe you're right — maybe this isn't the time or the place.

JUDITH
It isn't?

NELSON
No. How are you fixed for tomorrow?

JUDITH
Uh?

NELSON
My apartment. I'll do the cooking. I make a great omelet.

JUDITH
I don't like omelets. I have a high cholesterol level.

NELSON
Then we'll just make love.

JUDITH
Nelson, I don't even know you.

NELSON
What's to know? Currently unmarried, no children, still friends with my ex-wife, Liberal Arts degree from Fordham —

JUDITH
That's not what I mean.

NELSON
Judith — are you interested in me at all?

JUDITH
... Yes.

NELSON
Then let's see where it leads. If it's any consolation, I'm serious. I'm not just out to get laid.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
(quietly)
Be simpler if you were.

NELSON
Will you see me tomorrow?

JUDITH
You don't give a person much room.

NELSON
That's the idea.

He leans over and kisses her very gently on the forehead.

NELSON
Think about it.

He studies her for a long moment, then crosses to the door.

JUDITH
Nelson --

He pauses. She gets up and goes to him. Puts her arms around him. Kisses him full on the mouth. Then, holding hands but not speaking, they leave the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

as they come down the stairs. Stop by the front door.

JUDITH
Don't kill me, but I have a question about the case.

NELSON
Naturally.

JUDITH
What happened to the letter Lorna sent to Mrs. Fleckstein? The one with all the names?

NELSON
She destroyed it.

JUDITH
Then how could he compare the letter with Lorna's typewriter?

CONTINUED:

NELSON
He kept the envelope. We found it in his office.

JUDITH
So the ladies are still safe. Reputation-wise.

NELSON
For the moment. Why?

She doesn't answer. Obviously troubled. Then:

JUDITH
Nelson ... if you found out I was holding something back ... I mean, if I wasn't telling you everything ... would it change your feelings toward me?

NELSON
Want the truth?

JUDITH
I guess so.

NELSON
I know you're holding something back. It's your nature. And it bugs the hell out of me — as a cop. But as a man who happens to be crazy about you — no, it doesn't change my feelings. I just wish you trusted me more.

Judith is touched. She kisses him.

JUDITH
Thank you. Give me a little more time.

Nelson opens the door.

NELSON
By the way — what happened to that manila envelope?

JUDITH
Envelope?

CONTINUED:

NELSON

It was on the coffee table, but when I answered the phone it disappeared.

JUDITH

Oh. I — uh — put it away. Just some of Bob's office work. The house is such a mess that —

Nelson kisses her on the lips, interrupting her.

NELSON

You know where to find me if you need me.

He goes out.

ON JUDITH

Thoroughly drained. She closes the door and leans against it, her mind spinning.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SINGER HOUSE - NIGHT

Bob's car pulls into the garage. He gets out and crosses to the front door.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

as he comes in. Lamps are softly lit and the dining room table has been set with their best china. Two candles in silver holders stand on either side of a crystal bowl of fresh-cut flowers. Bob looks around. Goes to the foot of the stairs.

BOB

Judith?

JUDITH'S VOICE

(from o.s.)

Be down in a minute.

INT. UPPER HALLWAYS

as she hurries from the bedroom, affixing an earring.

CONTINUED:

She's taken great care with her clothes and makeup — she looks quite lovely.

INT. KATE'S ROOM

Kate is sprawled in a beanbag chair with her homework, half watching a "Brady Bunch" re-run. Judith looks in.

JUDITH
Your father's home. Go down
and let him know he still lives
here.

Grumbling, Kate snaps off the set.

INT. HALL

as Judith continues on to Joey's room.

INT. JOEY'S ROOM

FEATURING the proscenium of a toy puppet theatre. Two hand puppets — Bert and Ernie from "Sesame Street" — are confronting each other on the stage. Ernie waves a slip of paper at Bert.

'ERNIE'
You're goin' to jail, buster.
I'm giving you a ticket.

'BERT'
What about you, dumbhead? Look
at the way you drive.

Judith has paused in the doorway. Pleased by her son's histrionic abilities. Then she does a double-take.

JUDITH
Hey!

She advances into the room as Joey's head appears above stage level.

JUDITH
That's my parking ticket! I've
been looking all over for it.

CONTINUED:

She snatches it from 'Ernie's' grasp.

JOEY

I'm using it!

JUDITH

Use something else. And please stay out of my purse, Joey, I've told you a hundred times. Now go and say hello to your father.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Bob is mixing himself a drink as Judith, Kate, and Joey come downstairs. He gives the kids an affectionate hug. Lifts Joey off his feet. Then, to Judith:

BOB

Hi.

(indicates table)

What's the occasion?

JUDITH

I thought we'd have a nice dinner for a change. The kids already ate.

BOB

(pleased)

Feels like my birthday.

JUDITH

I made Tournedos Rossini.

BOB

My God. Goose liver and all?

JUDITH

Even truffles — at eight bucks a can.

(to kids)

Okay, back upstairs. We'll be up later to say goodnight.

They takes the steps two at a time and Bob and Judith are left alone.

BOB

Make you a drink?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
No, thanks. Why don't you sit down? I'll get the salad.

Bob seats himself at the table. Judith disappears into the kitchen and returns with salad plates. She lights the candles.

BOB
I could get used to this.

JUDITH
I haven't cooked for you much lately. I thought we'd relax, maybe talk a little ...

BOB
(slight smile)
Without yelling?

JUDITH
Without yelling. Oops, I forgot the wine glasses.

She goes back into the kitchen again. Bob finishes his drink. Savoring the moment. Things seem to be returning to normal. As he reaches for his salad fork, there is a crash o.s.

INT. KITCHEN

as he hurries in. Judith stands in the middle of the room, a look of dawning comprehension on her face. She's dropped one of the wine glasses — it lies in shards at her feet — but she doesn't seem to know it.

JUDITH
Bob — I figured it out!

BOB
What?

JUDITH
The case. I know who killed Fleckstein!

BOB
Oh, for Christ sake —

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Bob, listen to me. I know who did it. It was —

BOB
I don't want to hear about it!

JUDITH
(incredulous)
You've got to be kidding.

BOB
Judith, I want us to go into the other room and eat our salads.

JUDITH
I just told you I know who the murderer is. Don't you think that's a little more important than a couple of salads?

BOB
No.

She goes to the phone.

BOB
What are you doing?

JUDITH
I'm calling Nelson.

BOB
(warningly)
Judith ...

She ignores him. Dials the operator.

JUDITH
Operator? Shorehaven police, please.

Bob stalks out of the room. Judith drums her fingers impatiently. Then:

VOICE
(on phone)
Shorehaven station, Sergeant Brown speaking.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH

Sergeant? This is Mrs. Singer.
Is Lieutenant Sharpe there?

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Brown is at a desk. He and Jim Hogan have been eating egg-roll from a carton of takeout Chinese food. INTERCUT CONVERSATION.

BROWN

No, ma'am. He left about a half
hour ago. Can I help you?

JUDITH

Would he be home yet? It's very
important.

BROWN

He might be, ma'am. Unless he
stopped off for dinner.

JUDITH

Well -- where does he usually eat?

BROWN

I guess he grabs something around
here. Can I take a message?

JUDITH

No. Yes. Tell him to call me.
Tell him I know.

BROWN

Know what, ma'am?

JUDITH

He'll understand.

She hangs up. Stay with Brown. He glances at Hogan, who's looking at him questioningly.

BROWN

The Singer broad. She wants the
Lieutenant.

BACK TO JUDITH

Agitated. She finds Nelson's card in her purse and dials his number.

INT. NELSON'S APARTMENT

The lights are out. The phone rings -- and rings.

ON JUDITH

Hanging up. She grabs her purse and heads for the other room.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Bob is making himself another drink. He watches Judith as she crosses to the front door.

BOB
Where are you going?

JUDITH
I have to find Lieutenant Sharpe. He may be in one of the restaurants near the police station.

BOB
Judith --

JUDITH
If he calls, I should be back in twenty minutes.

BOB
This is absolute insanity!

JUDITH
Bob, please try to understand. I've solved the case and I'm very proud of myself. All I want to do is tell the police.

BOB
Judith -- I forbid you to leave this house.

JUDITH
What?

BOB
I think you heard what I said.

JUDITH
(beat)
Yes, I guess I did. Well ... I'm sorry. I really am. But I don't need your permission.

CONTINUED:

BOB
Then I might not be here when you get back.

JUDITH
I hope you don't mean that.

BOB
And if I do? Are you willing to blow ten years of marriage?

JUDITH
What kind of marriage? Bob, we've just been going through the motions lately. Maybe after tonight we can come up with something better.

BOB
You never said you weren't happy.

JUDITH
I never said I was. And you never asked.

A long pause. Then:

BOB
I'll be upstairs. You still have time to change your mind.

She doesn't answer. He turns away, carrying his drink, and slowly mounts the steps.

ON JUDITH

Watching him go. She looks at the dining room table, the candles flickering in their holders. The scene is very warm and domestic. Tempting. Reluctantly, she opens the door and leaves the house.

INT. NELSON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The phone is RINGING. A beat, then the sound of a key in the door. Nelson hurries in, not bothering to turn on the light, and snatches up the receiver.

NELSON
Hello?

CONTINUED:

But there's only a dial tone. The caller has hung up.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Sergeant Brown moves away from the phone. He settles back in his chair, reaches for an egg-roll, and opens the evening paper.

EXT. SHOREHAVEN STREET - NIGHT

as Judith parks her station wagon near the shopping center. Most of the stores are closed, but lights burn in a hamburger emporium. She goes to the window and looks in.

HER POV - RESTAURANT

A few people sit at tables. Assorted teenagers. But no Nelson. She walks back to her car.

INT. SINGER HOUSE

as Bob comes downstairs. Sees that she's gone. He puts down his untouched drink and goes into the dining room. One by one, he blows out the candles.

INT. LE BONNE SOUP - NIGHT

Butcher block tables and huge tureens of the soup de jour. Judith stands inside the doorway, scanning the patrons. None of the faces is familiar. She leaves.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

as she get in the station wagon and drives off.

ON JUDITH

Turning down another street. There are two restaurants in the middle of the block. Both luncheon spots. Both closed. She debates with herself whether or not to go home — and then, suddenly, a flashing red light floods the interior of the car. Her eyes dart to the rear-view mirror.

HER POV - MIRROR

A police patrol car has come up behind her. Flagging her to pull over.

JUDITH

Braking to a stop by the curb. She rolls down her window.

EXT. STREET

The police car stops and cuts its lights. Jim Hogan gets out and walks over to her.

JIM
Mrs. Singer? Hi. Jim Hogan.

Hudith tenses. Tries not to show it.

JIM
Understand you're looking for Lieutenant Sharpe.

JUDITH
Y-yes.

JIM
He sent me to pick you up. Why don't you hop in and I'll drop you off?

JUDITH
Uh — suppose I follow you?

JIM
Well, ma'am, he said I should give you a lift.

JUDITH
Actually, I was on my way home. I can call him from there.

Hogan studies her for a long beat. Sees that she's frightened.

JIM
You know, don't you?

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Know? I — what do you mean?

He glances up and down the street. It's deserted. Then he slides his service revolver from its holster.

JIM
Sorry, ma'am. You'd better come with me.

JUDITH
Look, what is this? I have to get home. Really —

She breaks off as he opens the door for her and motions toward his car with the gun. She swallows and gets out of the station wagon.

INT. NELSON'S APARTMENT

He's in the kitchen making himself a sandwich. The phone RINGS in the other room. CAMERA FOLLOWS as he goes to answer. INTERCUT with Sergeant Brown.

NELSON
Hello?

BROWN
Lieutenant? Sergeant Brown. Did that lady ever reach you?

NELSON
What lady?

BROWN
Mrs. Singer. She wanted to talk to you. Said it was very important.

NELSON
I just got in. The phone was ringing —

BROWN
That was me.

NELSON
Where'd she call from?

CONTINUED:

BROWN
She didn't say. Home, I guess.

NELSON
I'll get right back to you.

He hammers the cut-off bar. Dials.

INT. SINGER KITCHEN

Bob is taking the Tournedos from the oven as the phone rings. He sets down the pan and eagerly snatches up the receiver. INTERCUT CONVERSATION.

BOB
Judith — ?

NELSON
It's Lieutenant Sharpe, Mr. Singer. I take it your wife isn't there.

BOB
She's looking for you. Where the hell are you?

NELSON
I'm at my apartment. How long ago did she leave?

BOB
Half hour.

NELSON
She would have been here by now — assuming she knows where I live.

BOB
She probably went down to the police station.

NELSON
No, I just talked to them. Mr. Singer — do you have any idea why she wanted me?

BOB
She says she solved the case.

CONTINUED:

Nelson reacts. Grips the phone tightly.

NELSON
Did she give you any name?

BOB
No, I -- didn't ask.
(beat)
Look, if she's not at your place
and she's not at the station,
where is she?

NELSON
I don't know.

BOB
(worried now)
She couldn't be in any danger,
could she?

NELSON
I doubt it. Let me call you
back.

BOB
Lieutenant, I want her found.
Do you understand? Get some
extra men from the state police --

NELSON
I'll do whatever I can. If she
comes home, let us know.

BOB
Of course.

NELSON
(quietly)
It's just too bad you didn't ask.

He hangs up.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The patrol car. Cruising.

INT. PATROL CAR

Jim is at the wheel. Judith sits scrunched against the

CONTINUED:

door on the passenger side.

JUDITH
Where are we going?

JIM
I don't know.

Silence. Both of them thinking furiously.

JUDITH
Suppose I promise not to tell anyone? I could just — go home and forget the whole thing.

JIM
Sure.

She gets an idea. Opens her purse and removes a slip of paper. It's the traffic ticket.

JUDITH
This is what you've been looking for, isn't it?

He glances over. Stunned.

JIM
Where the hell was that? I searched all over your house, your glove compartment, your purse —

JUDITH
Joey had it. My son. He was using it for a puppet show.

JIM
(disgusted)
Shit!

JUDITH
Here. Take it. You destroyed your copy, right? So if you got rid of this there's no proof.

JIM
It's not that easy any more.
(he bangs on the wheel angrily)
Goddamn traffic ticket! I've been kicking myself all week. I
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

JIM (Cont'd)
leave it on your windshield — at the fucking scene of the crime — with the date, the time, and my name!

JUDITH
You were on your way in to see Fleckstein, weren't you?

JIM
Yeah. And like a typical asshole cop I notice your meter's expired so I write you a ticket.

JUDITH
Well, you didn't know you were going to kill him.
(beat)
What happened? Wouldn't he pay you any more?

JIM
(a sharp look)
So you figured it out.

JUDITH
Some of it.

JIM
The son-of-a-bitch was going to call the Nassau County District Attorney. I — went a little crazy.

He lapses into silence and they continue to drive. By now they've left the commercial area behind.

JUDITH
I gave my husband your name.

JIM
I don't think so.

JUDITH
But what if I did? You'd be doing all this for nothing.

CONTINUED:

JIM
(beat)
I guess I don't have much of a choice.

His words have a finality about them. Judith suddenly feels very cold.

CUT TO:

NELSON'S APARTMENT

He's on the phone with Sergeant Brown, walking back and forth and kicking at a corner of the rug. INTERCUT.

NELSON
... highway patrol, the state police, and your own guys.

BROWN
Well, Hogan's not here and Ryker's on his way home —

NELSON
Find them. Now you told her I might be having dinner near the station house, so that's the place to start. We'll fan out from there.

BROWN
Check.

NELSON
Make those calls. I'm leaving now.

He hangs up, grabs a jacket, and slams out.

CUT TO:

INT. PATROL CAR - NIGHT

as Judith breaks the strained silence.

JUDITH
I've been thinking about your problem...

CONTINUED:

JIM
(beat)
I guess I don't have much of a choice.

His words have a finality about them. Judith suddenly feels very cold.

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CUT TO:

INT. PATROL CAR - NIGHT

as Judith breaks the strained silence.

JUDITH
I've been thinking about your problem...

CONTINUED:

JIM

My problem?

JUDITH

You can't very well just strangle me and dump me in the Sound.

JIM

Why can't I?

JUDITH

Because someone might see you. And you can't shoot me — they'd trace the bullet to your gun.

JIM

You keep trying, don't you?

(sighs)

All you had to do was mind your own business.

JUDITH

Okay, I made a nuisance of myself. But I was never a threat to you.

JIM

Come on, lady, I damn near fell over you in your neighbor's yard that night.

(taps the ticket)

And you had this.

JUDITH

I probably would've mailed it in without looking.

JIM

I couldn't take the chance. Not after you told your girlfriend how close you were to remembering something.

JUDITH

Wait a minute — how did you know about that?

(beat)

You were listening! You were outside Nancy's window.

CONTINUED:

JIM

Damn right.

NEW ANGLE - TRAFFIC LIGHT

Halfway down the block. Changing from green to red.

BACK TO SCENE

Judith notices it. Begins talking faster.

JUDITH

Look, all you have to do is get rid of this traffic ticket. There's no other proof.

JIM

Yes there is.
(beat)
There's you.

He slows down for the light.

CLOSER ANGLE

Surreptitiously, she curls her fingers around the door handle.

BACK TO SCENE

as the car comes to a stop. Suddenly, she yanks on the handle and throws the door open.

JIM

Hey!

But she is already on the street. Running.

NEW ANGLE - JUDITH

Trying to get her bearings. The neighborhood is deserted, but it's very familiar. She realizes that up ahead is her children's school. There's a squeal of tires behind her. She looks over her shoulder.

HER POV - PATROL CAR

Slamming to a stop. Jim scrambles out. Coming after her on foot.

JUDITH

Running up the front path to the school. She knows the door will be locked, so she cuts along the side.

JIM

Gaining on her. His gun is in his hand now.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as she reaches the rear of the building. There's a schoolyard, with swings, a jungle-gym, and a concrete basketball court. No place to hide. Her eyes is caught by the line of ground floor windows. She runs over to one of them, slips off her shoe, and uses it to break a pane of glass. Gingerly, she reaches in through the jagged opening and unlatches the lock. She slides up the window. Kicking off her other shoe, she hoists herself over the sill.

JIM

Coming around the side. He sees:

HIS POV - OPEN WINDOW

BACK TO JIM

Running toward it.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Judith finds herself amid rows pf tiny desks. Everything scaled down to the elementary school level. She feels exposed, a Gulliver in this diminished world. The blackboard is a scrawl of first-grade spelling, and a live rabbit in a cage blinks pink eyes at her. She wheels at a harsh sound.

HER POV - PARROT

Also in a cage. Squawking.

JUDITH

She backs away — into the teacher's desk. And then Jim's face appears at the window. She screams. Bolts for the door.

INT. CENTRAL HALLWAY

A long corridor of lockers, classroom doorways, and bulletin boards. Signs proclaiming: "JULIUS CAESAR — SAT. NITE — ADMISSION $1.75." Barefooted, Judith flees down the hall. Reaches a door with a pebbled-glass inset marked: OFFICE. Goes in.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Several desks in the moonlight. Filing cabinets. Framed portraits of Washington and Lincoln. And just what she's looking for — telephones. She runs over to one of them.

HER POV - PHONE

A tiny cylinder lock on the dial.

BACK TO JUDITH

A cry of frustration. She hurries to the other phones. All have locks. Swiftly, she returns to the door. Opens it a crack.

HER POV - JIM

Moving down the central hallway. He glances around, disoriented, not sure where she went.

ON JUDITH

Closing the door. Trapped.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Judith's station wagon is parked where she left it, the door to the driver's side half open. Two patrol cars surround it, their radios blaring, and several POLICEMEN are present. ANGLE WIDENS as Nelson drives up with Sergeant Brown. They get out and move quickly over to the others.

NELSON
Who found it?

COP
I did, sir.

NELSON
How long ago?

COP
Ten minutes.

Nelson puts his hand on the hood of the station wagon.

NELSON
Still warm.

He peers inside.

BROWN
No sign of a struggle.

NELSON
She must've stopped voluntarily. Why would she do that? Everything around here is closed.

BROWN
She can't be far.

NELSON
All right — let's start knocking on doors. Maybe she went inside somewhere to make a call.

One of the cops, who is standing by a patrol car, calls over.

2ND COP
Lieutenant —

NELSON
Yes?

CONTINUED:

2ND COP
Something just came in on the radio. About two miles from here — they found an abandoned patrol car.

The men exchange glances.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - NIGHT

as Jim's footsteps approach. Judith ducks down behind a filing cabinet. Holds her breath. A moment later the door opens and he looks in. His eyes sweep the room. He's about to turn away when he notices:

HIS POV - PHONE

The receiver is off the hook. Judith hadn't bothered to replace it.

BACK TO SCENE

as he comes into the office and crosses to the desk.

ON JUDITH

Petrified. As soon as he turns he'll see her hunched down by the filing cabinet. She creeps out from her cover and inches toward the door.

NEW ANGLE

He hears her. He wheels and lunges — but there's a swivel chair in his path and he stumbles over it.

INT HALL

Judith bursts from the office, runs across the corridor, and pushes through the double doors of the auditorium.

INT. AUDITORIUM

Dark, with patches of moonlight from the high windows.

CONTINUED:

Lanes of seats stretch to the stage where the papier-mache set for "Julius Caesar" is in evidence. Judith barrels down a side aisle, ducks into a row, and throws herself to the floor.

CLOSE - JUDITH

Frozen there. Ears straining. She hears the doors open. A long beat and then the lights suddenly come on.

NEW ANGLE

Jim is at the circuit box.

HIS POV - SEATS

Row after row.

BACK TO SCENE

He knows she hasn't had time to leave by the stage exit.

JIM
Come on out, Mrs. Singer. Make
it easier for both of us.

No response. He starts down the center aisle, checking each row.

ON JUDITH

There's nothing she can do. Within moments he'll spot her. Her desperate gaze fastens on:

HER POV - FIRE ALARM

A small glass box on the wall.

BACK TO JUDITH

Still on her belly, she crawls toward it.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

as the police vehicles converge on Hogan's abandoned patrol car. Several OFFICERS are waiting for them. Everyone piles out. Brown reacts, surprised. Turns to Nelson.

BROWN
This is Jim Hogan's car.

NELSON
Where the hell is he?

BROWN
(to others)
Anyone see him?

They shake their heads. Nelson's puzzled; he knows instinctively that something's very wrong. He opens the door of the patrol car and glances into the front seat. He's about to close it when he pauses, reaches in, and takes out the crumpled parking ticket. He studies it for a long time.

INT. AUDITORIUM

Jim is halfway down the center aisle. Only a few more rows to Judith's hiding place.

JIM
I'm gonna find you, Mrs. Singer.
Why don't you just come out?

NEW ANGLE

She's reached the end of her row. The alarm box is only a few feet away. Gritting her teeth, she lurches to her feet and darts out from her cover.

ON JIM

as he sees her. His hand goes for his gun.

ON JUDITH

Scratching at the box. She beats at it with her fist until the glass shatters. Cutting herself in the process.

CONTINUED:

JIM

Don't!

But she pulls the lever.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The gathering by Hogan's car. Heads snap around at the shrill clang of the alarm bell.

BROWN

That's the school!

Everyone is suddenly running.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM

A tableau — Judith at the alarm box and Jim a few yards away.

JIM

Stupid bitch!

He raises his gun.

JUDITH

You can't! Don't you understand!
They'll trace the bullet!

It's a point. He hesitates. And Judith takes off for the stage. The clang of the alarm is deafening.

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT

as the officers run up the path and put their shoulders to the front door.

NELSON

Some of you go around in back!

A few race off and Nelson joins Brown and two of the others. Battering against the door until it crashes open.

INT. AUDITORIUM

Judith is on the stage. Backing away. Jim goes through the orchestra pit and climbs a short flight of steps to the apron. Now they're face to face. She looks around wildly but there's no escape route. He moves toward her. She continues her retreat, knocking over one of the columns. And then she sees a knife on a prop table. She snatches it up. Brandishes it. But then realizes, to her dismay, that it's one of the assasination knives from the play — silver-painted cardboard. Jim knocks it aside and grabs her.

NELSON'S VOICE
(o.s.):
Hold it!

Jim wheels.

NEW ANGLE

Nelson, with Brown and the other officers, stands in the doorway of the auditorium. All of them have their weapons levelled. Jim hesitates. They advance quickly down the center aisle. The alarm beats at them.

ON JUDITH

Heaving an immense sigh of relief.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHOREHAVEN STREET - NIGHT

Nelson's car drives slowly along a deserted thoroughfare.

INT. CAR

Judith sits close to him on the front seat. Her hand is bandaged with his handkerchief.

NELSON
... the Tudor Rose Motel was
part of his beat, so he must've
seen Fleckstein coming in and
out with a different woman every
day. That's when he got the idea
of supplementing his income with
a little tax-free blackmail. If
(CONT'D)

CONTINUED:

NELSON (Cont'd)

it hadn't been for the murder, he would've probably started blackmailing the ladies too.

Judith is silent.

NELSON

Nothing to say? That's not like you.

JUDITH

I think I'm retiring from the detective business. Nobody told me about the occupational hazzards.

NELSON

We tried.

(smiles)

But I'm glad you didn't listen.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

as he pulls to a stop behind her station wagon.

INT. CAR

NELSON

Got your keys?

JUDITH

Uh-huh.

NELSON

How's the hand?

JUDITH

Better. Oh, I should give you back your handkerchief.

NELSON

Give it to me tomorrow. I'll go in early to write my report ...

(beat)

Then I'll be at my apartment.

She's in the process of unwrapping the handkerchief. She pauses. Looks at him.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
So we're back to that.

NELSON
Uh-huh. We're back to that.
(beat)
Will you come?

JUDITH
I don't know.

NELSON
Either way, I'll be there.

JUDITH
You're giving me a lot of rope.

NELSON
Who says I play fair?

She studies him with a great deal of tenderness. Leans over and kisses him.

JUDITH
Good night, Nelson.

NELSON
Good night.

He watches as she leaves the car, crosses in front of his windshield, and gets into her station wagon. She starts the motor and makes a U-turn. Nelson honks at her. Puzzled, she stops and they both roll down their windows.

NELSON
Watch that. You'll get a ticket.

She smiles. Drives off. Nelson sits there until she's out of sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. SINGER HOUSE - NIGHT

as she parks in the garage beside Bob's car and walks to the front door. The downstairs lights are lit. She hesitates for a long beat, and then goes in.

INT. LIVING ROOM

She looks around. It almost seems to be someone else's house.

BOB'S VOICE
(o.s.)
Judith?

She goes to the foot of the stairs. Looks up.

NEW ANGLE

Bob, in a robe, stands on the landing. His face is worn and drained. He starts down.

BOB
Are you ... all right?

JUDITH
Yes.

BOB
Your hand —

JUDITH
Just a cut. It's fine.

He's on the bottom step now. Suddenly, unexpectedly, he throws his arms around her. Holds her very close.

BOB
I was so worried about you.

Moved, she returns the embrace. Then studies him. Surprised.

JUDITH
You've been crying.

BOB
Well ... it beats drinking.

JUDITH
Poor darling. You _were_ worried.

BOB
So were the police — that's what frightened me. I called them every five minutes.

JUDITH

How are the kids?

BOB

Asleep. They didn't even know you were gone.

JUDITH

Do you know what happened?

BOB

(nods)

I just got off the phone with Sergeant Brown.

(beat)

You had yourself quite a night.

JUDITH

(a sigh)

Yeah. Sure did.

She sinks down on the step. Bob sits beside her.

BOB

Judith, I want you to promise me ... please promise me ... that you won't do anything like this again.

JUDITH

Bob — how many more murders do you think I'll run across in my lifetime?

BOB

I don't know. But I just want you here with me and the kids.

JUDITH

(touches his hand)

It's been a long day. Why don't you get some sleep? We can talk tomorrow.

BOB

Okay ...

(he rises)

One thing ... in spite of what I just said — I'm proud of you.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Thanks.

BOB
You put it all together. First thing in the morning, I'm going to tell Joey and Kate. They've got quite a mother.

He bends and kisses the top of her head. Then, weary, he begins to mount the stairs.

BOB
Coming up?

JUDITH
Maybe later. I've still got a lot of adrenalin going.

He nods sympathetically. Continues to the top.

ON JUDITH

Just sitting there. Looking at her bandaged hand. She touches the handkerchief thoughtfully, then gets to her feet. The table is still set for dinner and she suddenly realizes she's ravenously hungry. She starts for the kitchen. And then pauses, remembering something.

NEW ANGLE

as she goes to the sofa, reaches under the cushion, and slides out the manila envelope. Finding a pack of matches, she tears one out, lights it, and holds it under a corner of the envelope. The paper begins to burn. Quickly, she walks the flaming package to the fireplace and tosses it into the grate.

NEW ANGLE

as it blossoms with fire. The edges of the envelope blacken, curl inward.

ON JUDITH

Satisfied, she goes into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

She looks at the charred remains of the Tournedos. Then gets an idea that utterly delights her. Ignoring the beef, she sets a single placemat on the table. Puts down a fork, a linen napkin, and a wine glass. She fills the glass with the untasted wine from their dinner. And then she's ready for the piece de resistance.

NEW ANGLE

as she marches to the freezer and takes out the Sara Lee chocolate cake. Places it on the table. Peels off the lid and the inner wax paper. Then sits regally down.

JUDITH

Free to devour the entire cake if she wishes. Free, in fact, to do anything she damn pleases. She raises the wine in a toast to herself.

ON FIREPLACE

The Polaroid photographs are crackling and curling. Pink bodies and familiar faces eradicated by the cleansing flames ...

FADE OUT